

A N
A P O L O G Y
FOR THE
L I F E
O F
GEORGE ANNE BELLAMY.
LATE OF COVENT-GARDEN THEATRE.

WRITTEN BY HERSELF.

To which is annexed,
Her original Letter to JOHN CALCRAFT, Esq;
advertised to be published in October, 1767,
but which was then violently suppressed.

" The Web of our Life is of a mingled Yarn, good and ill
" together; our Virtues would be proud, if our Faults whipt
" them not; and our Crimes would despair, if they were not
" cherished by our Virtues."

All's Well that Ends Well, Act 4, Scene iii.

THE SECOND EDITION.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

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M DCC LXXXV.



GEORGE ANN BELLAMY.



I HAD now rendered myself so useful to Mr. Fox, not only by copying his letters, but by my constant attendance in the House of Commons, during the session, my retentive faculties being almost as extraordinary as his own, that he began to be dissipated, or my not going to Hellwood as usual. He was also more particular in his observations at this time, as he wished it possible to fix that weather-cock, Charles Townshend, who I thought was a great favourite. This alone induced me to break through the resolution I had formed, and more frequently to make one in the parties. When they began to play, I always retired, and as no other woman but myself was permitted to be there upon these occasions, my situation was not the most agreeable.

During the future hours this afforded me, I had time to indulge my reflections. And these reflections informed me, that I was miserable. This was to me a new not I languished for happiness, without being able to distinguish what road I was to take in the pursuit of it. The thoughts of my numerous debts were not the reason of this dejection, as I was well assured that upon my being

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LETTER LXVI.

May 26, 17—

I HAD now rendered myself so useful to Mr. Fox, not only by copying his letters, but by my constant attendance in the House of Commons, during the sessions, my retentive faculties being almost as extraordinary as his own, that he began to be displeased, at my not going to Hollywood as usual. He was also more particular desirous of it at this time, as he wished, if possible, to fix that weather-cock, Charles Townshend, with whom I was a great favourite. This alone induced me to break through the resolution I had formed, and more frequently to make one in the parties. When they began to play, I always retired, and as no other woman but myself was permitted to be there upon those occasions, my situation was not the most agreeable.

During the leisure hours this afforded me, I had time to indulge my reflections. And these reflections informed me, that I was miserable. But why I was so I knew not. I languished for happiness, without being able to distinguish what road I was to take in the pursuit of it. The thoughts of my numerous debts were not the reason of this dejection, as I was well assured, that upon my be-

ing resolute, Mr. Calcraft would pay them. Nor was my situation with regard to him the bane of my tranquillity. For as every body supposed me married, or at least all such as I wished to do so, and I looked upon it as an event which was *certainly* to happen, that gave me very little anxiety.

A depression of spirits, which I could not account for, overclouded my mind. And in these fits of melancholy I would indulge my tears for hours together. At length I impured it to the unwearied attention I was obliged to bestow on the different employments I was engaged in: I therefore resolved to accept an invitation I had received from Mrs. Child, who, with her husband, was settled at Brussels, and occasionally went to Cologne. And as I had never been able to fulfil my promise of paying a visit to Voltaire, I intended, the approaching summer, to do so, and to accomplish both.

But two events prevented me from carrying my design into execution. The first indeed did not immediately concern me, but as it was productive of great distress both to the family of the Secretary of War, and our own, I shared in the uneasiness it occasioned. As the public have been greatly misled with regard to the affair, and various reports have been propagated which had not the least foundation in truth, I will repeat the circumstances to you, agreeable to my promise at the conclusion of my last letter, as they really happened.

Mr. Fox being upon a visit to his brother, Lord Ilchester, Mr. Calcraft called at Holland-house, according to his usual custom, to enquire, before he wrote to his patron, whether there were any letters for him, or any other business to inform him of. One day as he called, he found Panning, whom Mr. Fox had now made his steward, in conversation with a man who had the appearance of a farmer. Just as Mr. Calcraft entered, he heard Panning say, "I am sure it is not my master's hand." "But here comes a gentleman who can inform you better than I can." Saying this, he delivered into Mr. Calcraft's hand a leaf. When Mr. Calcraft had looked over it, he declared that the signature was not Mr. Fox's. "Nor," continued he, "can there be such a leaf really existing."



existing. For the late Mrs. Horner discharged Ayliffe from her service, upon account of his having married a person she did not approve of, and it is not to be supposed she would grant him a lease for the life of himself, his son, and that very wife for the imprudent choice of whom she had dismissed him.

The farmer no sooner heard this, than he exclaimed, "Then I am undone! the villain has robbed me of what I had saved for my daughter's portions!" Upon a further investigation of the affair, Mr. Calcraft found that the lease given to the farmer had been forged, purposely to raise money upon Mr. Fox had made this Ayliffe a siding commissary. The income arising from this employment was alone more than sufficient to support such a family as his; but he had, in addition to it, adopted the profession of buying estates. As he was supposed to be a good judge of the value of land, Mr. Calcraft had empowered him to purchase for him estates in Dorsetshire. And Ayliffe had already received the sum of eleven thousand pounds from him for that purpose: Else, in all probability, he would have continued his depredations for some time longer.

But my good gentleman no sooner discovered by this accident what Ayliffe had been at, than, ever anxious for his own interest, he immediately set out in pursuit of him. He found him at Salisbury, where, under pretext of the forgery, he had him taken, by proper persons into custody. This had the desired effect. In the first emotions of his terror, he refunded the whole of the eleven thousand pounds. Mr. Calcraft had him then immediately secured by Justice Ridding's men, who had come in pursuit of him, in consequence of an application from the farmer. They clapped a pair of handcuffs on him, and brought him to town. When he was committed, an express was sent off to Mr. Fox, who still continued at Lord Chester's, to inform him of the transaction. And I can take upon me to affirm, that the first knowledge that gentleman had of it was, after Ayliffe stood committed for trial. Mr. Fox was unjustly censured upon this occasion, as indeed he was upon many others, where his *Commiss* had all the settlements, and so all the *business*.

# THE LIFE OF

The unhappy man, solicitous for life, sent his wife to me, after his conviction, to intreat that I would use my interest in his favour with his injured master, and request of him, that he would apply to his Majesty to extend his mercy towards him. At the same time he wrote to Mr. Fox, who was now in town, and whom I perceived to be greatly shocked at the affair. In his letter, he requested that gentleman's forgiveness; and acknowledging himself the most ungrateful of men, promised that if he would but save him from his merited sentence, his whole life should be employed in endeavouring to deserve the mercy, and to atone for the enormities he had been guilty of.

But the very same hour, he wrote to Mr. Pitt, who was then minister, to inform him, that if he would rescue him from his approaching fate, he would discover such *iniquitous practices* of his late employer, as should fully repay the saving him. Mr. Pitt, with a liberality of sentiment which does honour to his memory, sent the wretch's letter immediately to Mr. Fox. That gentleman received it as he was preparing to go to court on purpose to solicit the prisoner's pardon. But this discovery of his baseness now rendered it impossible; as such an application would have carried with it a declaration of his being in the villain's power, and that he was apprehensive of his putting his threats into execution. No intercession was of course made for him, and he suffered the due reward of his crimes.

Thus did this wretched being fall a victim to his unparalleled ingratitude and duplicity. And by him was the best of masters repaid for all his kindness, in the same manner as he was by the generosity of his dependents. To wind up the tragical story, I must add, that poor Manning, who was the innocent cause of bringing the affair to light, was deprived of sense and life in consequence of it. — I need not inform you, that a very different turn has been given to the foregoing incident by Mr. Fox's enemies. Prejudice and enmity have painted his conduct upon the occasion in the blackest light. But the good man, armed with that strongest of breast-plates, a heart untainted, let the shafts of calumny at defiance.

As

As I was now in a situation, which prevented my being able to travel, it was impracticable for me to take my intended trip to the Continent. I was therefore obliged to make a virtue of necessity, and content myself as well as I could at home. I had usually three or four ladies with me, besides birds of passage, the great people not making their parties in summer. On the fourth of September I was taken ill, and before Dr. Hunter could come from London I was, by the help of a country midwife, brought to bed of a son, which Mr. Fox named after himself, Henry Fox Calcraft.

I had lain in about four or five days, and was infinitely sicker than could be expected, when my gentleman favoured me with a visit, to inform me that he had received a letter from Mr. Davy, desiring payment of the community. As I had never asked Mr. Calcraft for a mill-ning upon it, he entertained great hopes that it had been quite obliterated. Being much displeased with his speaking to me on pecuniary subjects, as so improper a time, I desired that he would immediately quit the room, pay me the money, and fulfil his contract. The latter I refused him, I would insist upon his doing, as soon as ever I was able to leave my apartment: for I was not unacquainted with the deception he had practised upon me, relative to his patron's disapprobation of his marrying me, as well as with his having imposed upon him also. Struck with this reproach, he hastily quitted me, muttering, as he went, something about my extravagance.

When he was gone, I complained to a lady, who was upon a visit to me, and who professed herself my friend, of Mr. Calcraft's brutality, in troubling me about such a trifle, at so critical a juncture: when I had not only spent all that I had got at the theatre in entertaining his company, and supplying his brother and sister, but had likewise involved myself in debt for that purpose. Besides which, I had made it my study to serve him in his profession, and had done it so effectually, that to me he was indebted for the present extensive state of his business. My friendly intimate observing that I was more compassionate than usual, and having private reasons for wishing me removed from my present situation, either by death or



relentment; she took an opportunity so favourable to her wishes, to inform me, that the man whom I looked upon as my husband, neither was, nor, in all probability, would ever be so; as he had been married some years before he knew me, to a young woman at Grantham, who then resided with an aunt of his, named Moore.

Struck with instant madness by such unexpected information, I leaped out of bed, in order to find the cruel impostor, and revenge myself upon him. But before I could reach the door, I fell down senseless, and to all appearance dead. Nurse Carter, who had lived with me many years, and had bred up all my children, assisted by the lady, that had reduced me to this condition, replated me in my bed.

When I recovered my senses, I was in such excruciating pain, particularly in my side, that I could not speak. I had no breath but what I gasped for. A messenger was immediately dispatched for Mr. Adair, and Dr. Munster. At first it was concluded by those gentlemen, that my illness was occasioned by the ignorance of the woman who laid me. But they were assured by the nurses that it could not arise in any shape from her fault, as I had been so uncommonly well, even at that early period, as to permit them to leave me, whilst a lady who was upon a visit, and I entertained ourselves in conversation together. This was the account which my nurses gave the physical gentlemen; as they were as ignorant of the real cause of my illness, as the latter were themselves. Even Mr. Adair, the friend I confided in, knew nothing of the transaction, my delirium being such that I could not inform him. In the violence of my rage I attempted to destroy poor good Carter, who wished to prevent me from destroying her master and myself. Happy had the moment been in which I heard the fatal intelligence, had I really been deprived of a wretched life!

Mr. Calcraft was now really frantic. And my illness increasing, it baffled all the skill of the learned sons of Esculapius; so that every night was prophesied to be my last. I had no respiration but when a vein was opened. Had I laid down in bed, I should have been suffocated. I was therefore obliged to rest on the shoulder of each nurse

nurse alternately. Mr. Adair's care of me was unremitting. And though his numerous patients claimed his attendance every day in town, he returned every evening to Hollywood, in order to give me what relief he could; for the torments I endured were inexpressible.

After suffering, for several weeks, more than human nature could be supposed able to sustain, and having had recourse to almost every remedy in the *materia medica*; my death warrant was concluded to be signed for one o'clock the next morning. An hour that I ardently wished for; but which, at the same time, made me anxious to see a gentleman from London before its arrival. The gentleman came down the moment he received notice of my danger. And the business being settled for which he came, I was wholly resigned, and waited my visitation with the longing of a bride.

My mind was now perfectly tranquil. The world was lost to me, as well as the recollection of the injuries I had received. In this state, I fell into a sweet sleep, which was attended with a most singular dream. And as I have reason to consider it a fate preface of the calamities I have since suffered, I will here relate it. I imagined I was released from all my cares, and an inhabitant of Heaven. My destined appointment, when I got there, was to light fifty lamps. I entered upon my employment, and executed it with ease, till I came to the last lamp, which I broke in the attempt. The uneasiness this occasioned put an end at once to my dream and sleep, and I awoke in the greatest agitation.

In the morning, my visitant of the day before, came to take, as he thought, a last farewell. I informed him of my dream. He heard it with manifest pain, mingled with pity. "My dear child," said he, "you are destined to suffer a long life of misery and disappointment. I wish you may be as resigned when your hour of visitation shall come as you now are. I own I could have wished it had been passed." The holy seer was inspired with the gift of prophecy, as the sequel of my story will too fatally evince.

I was some time after informed, that the evening my visitor arrived, Dr. Francis endeavoured to engage him in

a controversial discourse, during supper, in order to show his superior talents. Mr. Darcy (which was the gentleman's name) seemed to decline a conversation that might terminate in dispute. But the doctor having been witness to the ignorance of a great number of his countrymen, (he was from Ireland,) who had been sent over from the lowest ranks of that people, as servitors to some colleges abroad, and after acquiring a little bad Latin, become either enthusiasts, hypocrites, or libertines, and suppose themselves qualified to dispense absolutions, without scarcely knowing what the word means, concluded this gentleman to be one of the same stamp. He was, on the contrary, a sound theologist, and united to great learning, a gentleness of manners, and a natural politeness, that would have graced a court.

I would not be understood to mean, from what I have just said, that the catholic clergy of Ireland are all in the same predicament. To my own knowledge, the late Mr. Archer and Mr. Richardson were ornaments to the world, and the religion they professed; as is the present Mr. O'Leary, who, with unaffected piety, is blest with that innocent cheerfulness, which, joined to his brilliant wit and sound understanding, makes him the admired darling of all who have the happiness of knowing him.

The Doctor very *illiberally*, as being one of the family, and styling himself the chaplain, continued the attack; till Mr. Darcy, being necessitated to reply, soon confuted him; and convinced the company, who all bestowed deserved praise on him, that he was deeply read in divinity; whilst the superficial Doctor had made more proficiency in the study of wine than of holy writ. The consequence of this conversation was, that two ladies who were present, convinced of the superiority of Mr. Darcy's arguments, were in a very short time introduced by that good man into the bosom of the mother church.

G. A. B.

LETTER



## LETTER LXVII.

June 10, 17—

I REMAINED in the dreadful condition described in my last letter, for several weeks. At the expiration of that time I was removed to town; when a consultation of the medical gentlemen was held twice a day. All their consultations, however, were of no service to me. Not one out of *nine* of the most eminent of the profession who were called in upon the occasion, could even guess at my disorder. One termed it an adhesion. Another an impostume. And two or three were fully persuaded that I had no lungs left.

In this manner they persecuted me all near Christmas. Till at last, despairing of being able to afford me any relief, and ashamed to take such sums without any apparent benefit, they all left me to my fate. My watchful and humane friend, Mr. Adair, indeed, continued his usual assiduity. And seeing that my other physicians had not rendered me any service, he brought to me, by stealth, Dr. Lucas. Though this gentleman's professional merit was very great, yet as his political principles were so different from our own, his introduction to our house was esteemed reprehensible.

Dr. Lucas soon found out what had puzzled so many of the fraternity, the real state of my disorder. He pronounced it to be a confirmed abscess in my lungs; as it afterwards proved to be. And informed me, that if it broke whilst I dozed, (for I could not sleep,) it would in all probability choke me. He had attended me in my early days in Dublin. He then acted as an apothecary. But being allowed one of the best chemists in the kingdom, he obtained a diploma. Yet he still prepared his own prescriptions himself. Notwithstanding the Doctor had lost an eye in analyzing some drug, he was not only a son of Apollo in medicine, but likewise in love, and he set off upon his entrance into his new line, as *un gallant homme*.

When he had properly prepared me, by such medicines as he thought necessary, he sent me to the hot-wells

at Bristol to keep my Christmas. At that season of the year, the Wells are only frequented by emaciated wretches, who are sent there to receive their *quintus*. I had totally lost the use of my limbs, could not lift my hand to my head, and was carried like a child, in the servant's arms. During the journey, I was ordered not to make my stages more than twenty miles a day. And notwithstanding it was intensely cold weather, I was obliged to travel with the windows of the chaise down. As I was well known on that road, the masters and mistresses of the inns seemed by their looks to take a last leave of me, and to regret the loss of so good a customer as I had been to them.

Mrs. Sparks, the wife of Mr. Sparks the comedian, left her family to accompany me. For my dear Miss Meredith had been obliged to return to France upon account of the same complaint which had occasioned her to visit that kingdom before. The two nurses and servants made a considerable suite. Indeed, I should not have been in the least concerned, had I spent Calcraft's whole fortune upon the occasion. My resentment had returned, and I would not permit him to take leave of me, or even suffer his name to be mentioned in my presence.

After a series of painful journeys, I arrived at the Wells; where the objects that appeared before me, the dreary prospect, and the dismal tolling of Clifton bell, presented nothing but a scene of horror to my imagination. I was consigned to the care of Doctor Ford, and ordered to drink port wine and punch. As I had never tasted either of those liquors before, having been accustomed to wine and water, the prescribed beverage was by no means pleasing to me. But the lacer had been so often used, that from my exhausted habit, a dropy was apprehended, even if I should get the better of my other complaint.

At length the abscess broke while I was taking an airing. I hurried back, and Doctor Ford (to whose care and attention I am much indebted) being sent for, he ordered me immediately down to the pump-room. I was there drenched with the water. He then directed that I should be put to bed between the blankets, well warmed, and some burnt brandy given me. This being done,

I lay

I lay down for the first time I had been able to do so for above four months. As soon as I was in bed I fell a sleep, and did not awake for *eighteen* hours. During that time I slept so fully, that it was often thought by those about me, that I had stolen a march into the other world. They frequently put a glass to my mouth, so doubtful were they of my retaining any signs of sensation; but still perceiving respiration, they were in hopes that my sleep would prove cordial to my vital powers, and tend to my recovery.

It was not to be expected, however, that my recovery should be so instantaneous as it proved to be. For when I awoke, I was not only able to stand, but to walk into the next room. The cause of my disorder being thus happily removed, I recovered strength every day. Upon which I resolved to leave my present melancholy abode, and return to town. And being at the same time determined that I would not go back again to Mr. Calcraft's, I wrote to my mother, to desire she would let me have her house.

The house in Brewer-street, which formerly belonged to Mr. Calcraft, had been taken by her, and she let it out to persons of fortune, thereby making a considerable addition to her income. Though she had more than sufficient to maintain her, yet she was so fond of dependents, that she was always complaining of being distressed. She had no reason, indeed, to complain of me in that point. As I never knew the value of money, it would have been rather extraordinary if my mother was the last person that received pecuniary tokens of my regard.

She had formed an intimacy with the widow of the well known Dr. Purcell. This lady, who was sister to Dr. Warburton, Bishop of Gloucester, had changed her name by a second marriage to Lock. Her only gratification was that of the table. And as she was not possessed of any property, my liberal parent greatly distressed herself to grant Mrs. Lock such temporary supplies as were necessary for the support of that good living she would be indulged in. So that, at her death, the sum amounted to upwards of seven hundred pounds.

My



My mother, though much hurt at the circumstance which occasioned my leaving Parliament-street, and considered this application needful, readily consented to admit me as a tenant. She accordingly wrote me word, that her house should be prepared for my reception. As soon as Mr. Calcraft obtained a knowledge of my design, he was like a madman. He feared, as he had great reason to do, that I should make no secret of my motive for quitting his house. Many of those who employed him, did so out of partiality to me. Lord Tyrawley, notwithstanding there had been some coolness between us, would not stand tamely by and see me ill treated. Nor was his lordship only to be feared, but my brother, who would face a lion. These considerations had their due weight with him, and occasioned, more than tenderness, his agitations.

Besides, my presiding at his table was a circumstance of no little importance to him; as my connections were so respectable, and I had such a number of patronesses among the first ranks. But what weighed more than any other consideration with him, and induced him to make me repeated promises of paying all my debts, was the expectation of the death of my friend Miss Meredith. This young lady was now given over by her physicians, and as she was supposed to have made a will in my favour, he concluded that when the event took place, my spirit would not suffer me to lie under an obligation to any one, particularly to a person I avowedly detested. So that he thought he could make me these promises, without any apprehension of his being required to fulfil them.

He accordingly wrote to Mrs. Sparks, desiring she would find an opportunity of communicating the contents of his letters to me, which consisted of a profusion of professions and promises. As he knew that I saw no one but her, whose interest made her his friend\*, he was well assured nothing which passed upon this occasion would transpire. His name threw me into such agitations, that

\* Mr. Calcraft had, at that time, three shares in the theatre, and was in possession of purchasing the patent; when Mr. Sparks I had the promise of being acting manager.

Mrs. Sparks much feared to mention it. But as he grew more pressing every post, for her to conjure me to receive a letter from him, or at least to permit her to read to me what he wrote to her, she ventured to speak to me upon the subject.

Upon my determining to return to London, I had wrote to my long-consulted oracle Mr. Quin, acquainting him with my situation, and requesting his advice. The good man wrote me for answer, that he would not advise me to make the rupture public, nor by any means to quit Parliament-street, till the whole of my debts were discharged; and even when I was a clean woman, not to sit till I was amply provided for. Had that gentleman duly considered of the advice he gave me, he must have known, that going back was the only method to prevent a completion of the other part of his directions. I was really well persuaded that when Mr. Calcraft had gained his purpose, that of my returning to him, he would soon forget his promises. His sordid disposition was not to be prevailed upon to part with a capital sum, unless incited to it by compulsion or fear. But as my worthy friend possessed a heart replete with generous sentiments, he was led to judge of others by his own.

After many attempts, Mrs. Sparks, at length, prevailed upon me to read one of Mr. Calcraft's letters. He conjured me in it, for the sake of humanity, for my children's sake, and for my own, to return to him. He bound himself, by the sacred name of his Creator, to pay my debts in three months. He concluded with urging the violence of his passion, and informed me that he had intreated some friend to deprecate my anger. This friend, probably, was the Doctor.

But these solicitations would have proved ineffectual, had not Mr. Quin's advice coincided with them. At last, wearied with these teasings, sick of the Wells, and tolerably recovered, I returned to the hated mansion, and to its more hated master. This, however, I would only consent to do, upon the express conditions, that he should never attempt to see or speak to me alone, and that he should be punctual in paying my debts, according to his proposal. These articles he readily acceded to. And I verily

verily believe, that if I had then requested him to take a step to the moon, and endeavour to prevail upon that luminary to make me a visit, he would have promised to do so; and with the same intention of fulfilling his promise. There might, however, have been some sparks of affection still remaining in his bosom, kept alive by the consequences of our union. And the regret he felt, when he was supposed to be beyond all hope of recovery, might make the savage believe he felt something like tenderness. But, ah! how unlike the tenderness to which the chords of my heart could only vibrate!

I am almost tempted, at times, to envy those who are born with an insensible heart. Happy people! (I am sometimes on the point of crying out) happy people! who pass through life in a state of enviable tranquillity. If ye do not taste, in an *exquisite* manner, of the pleasures this sublunary state affords; neither do the pains, with which it abounds, *pungently* affect you. And as the former are uncertain and transitory, and the latter sure and lasting, ye are gainers by the allotment. — So wise a man as Zeno is said to be, would never have taught the doctrine of Stoicism, nor his followers, the most sensible of the Greeks, have embraced it, had there not been some rational foundation for it, and the insensibility it enjoins desirable. — Had thy days, O Scerne, been spared to the united wishes of the lovers of genius, and thou hadst attained a good old age, it is a doubt, whether, upon a review of thy life, thou wouldst not have exchanged, had it been in thy power, thy *susceptibility*, (and, surely, no mortal was ever endowed with a greater portion) for this unfeeling Stoicism. — Impious thought! it admits not of a doubt. — Thou wouldst rather have exclaimed with me, “Give me my susceptibility, though it be attended with more than proportionate unhappiness! — The pleasures flowing from love and from philanthropy, neither of which can ever find a residence in a Stoic’s bosom, fully compensate for the augmented pains!”

As I write from the heart, my pen, notwithstanding my assurances that I would check its fallica, has again, Pegasus-like, run away with me. — And so I fear it will do to the end of the chapter.

G. A. B.

L E T



## LETTER LXVIII.

YOU now find me once more in *flant quo*, doing again the honours of Mr. Calcraft's table, and receiving the congratulations of my numerous friends upon the occasion. A short time after my recovery, a demand was made from the Treasury of the government plate left us by the late unfortunate General Braddock. The demand was rejected. Upon which, a suit was commenced. But that failing, we were left in possession of the royal donation, and the lions, unicorns, and hares, made their appearance at table.

I now received the news of Miss Meredith's death. She had bequeathed to me five hundred pounds, together with the twelve hundred pounds I was indebted to her; her jewels, which I have reason to believe cost near two thousand; and all her best laces, which were of great value. I regretted the loss of this valuable young lady most sincerely, and mourned for her inwardly as well as outwardly. Her legacy was of great service to me, as I was not engaged this season at the theatre, and had been obliged to borrow upon some of my diamonds, in order to defray my present expenses, depending upon Mr. Calcraft's performing his promise, at the expiration of the time agreed.

But this was a trifling consideration, when placed in the scale against the loss of an invaluable friend, whom I loved, and I shall ever lament. But I was born to outlive those who loved me, and at this juncture I have not a friend upon earth, but such as humanity hath induced to be so; no cheerful intimate, no person, in whose friendly bosom I can repose my cares. Nor, were I possessed, through a reverse of fortune, of any unforeseen happiness, can I say that a being exists who would share my joy.

My departed friend had conceived an affection for the Duke of Kingston. The Duke encouraged the propensity for some time, but at length destroyed all her hopes of happiness, by another attachment. With a constitution

tion extremely delicate, and sentiments equally so, she could not, although endowed with more than a common share of good sense, suppress her passion. Like a "worm in" bud, it fed upon her damask cheek, and put an end to her existence.

By her will, she left his Grace a gold box, in the lid of which was her picture. It fell to my lot to deliver it to him. A commission that was rather awkward for me, as his Grace had been a professed admirer of mine, though not an *honourable* one, as my friend had fondly hoped he would have been to her. Having wrote to give the Duke information of his bequest, he called upon me to receive it. When I presented it to him, I told him, I wished there had been two pictures, that I also might have had the counterfeit resemblance of a person I loved so well. Upon which, his Grace instantly took out his penknife, and cutting the portrait from the lid, gave it me. Such a striking proof of disregard for a woman's memory, whose life was in all probability contracted upon his account, affected me so much, that I left his Grace, with contempt, to walk off with the box at his leisure.

One of the conditions Mr. Culcraft had entered into, that of not seeing me alone, he strictly adhered to. As fear is the sure concomitant of guilt, he dreaded my reproaches, and therefore carefully avoided me. Being secure that I should now keep my injuries a secret, he forgot the promise he had made relative to my debts. His principal object in pressing so vehemently my return, had been to save appearances; and that purpose was now answered. He therefore thought, as the solemn vows made to accomplish it were only known to myself and Mrs. Sparks, they might be dispensed with; and that with regard to the culpability of breaking them, he would venture with Macbeth "to jump the life to come."—The man, by whom such solemn appeals are lightly thought of, no ties can bind, but those which correspond with his wishes. It is a dread of the laws of this country, and public shame, which alone keeps him honest. If these can be evaded, neither the fear of offending, by a breach of sacred vows, that Being in whose name they were made;

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the instigations of honour, nor the reproaches of conscience, can enforce the fulfillment of them. I found to my cost this observation verified.

In return for Mrs. Sparks's great attention to me during my illness, I not only consented to play the "Mourning Bride" for his benefit, but I disposed of near two hundred gold tickets for him. As I had not played since it was reported that I had lost my lungs, and had been so often killed by the collectors of news for the papers, it was not to be wondered at that the house was crowded. But what excited a general amazement was, that my voice had never been more powerful. From the uncommon applause I received, the audience appeared to be well pleased. Nor was Mr. Sparks less so, the emolument being very considerable.

As home was now grown hateful to me, I was never there but when our house was crowded with company. I loved music to excess, which brought me acquainted with all the capital performers, both vocal and instrumental. I went very often to Frazer's\*, where one evening I met Lady St. Leger, mother to my late amiable friend Miss St. Leger, afterwards the wife of Colonel Burton, whom I have frequently mentioned in my preceding letters. The youngest daughter, Miss Kitty, boarded with her Ladyship; who, by means of her jointure, and an additional pension, obtained for her by the friendship of Lady Harrington, was enabled to indulge herself in keeping a good deal of company.

Her ladyship was one of the Irish second-rate women of fashion. She was very insolent at times, and not unfrequently vulgar. But to enable you to acquire a knowledge of her character from her conduct, I shall present you with a little trait of her Ladyship, which will give you a much better view of it than any description of mine can do. Her husband, Sir John St. Leger, the Judge Jefferies of Ireland, had been remarkably severe to a number of poor wretches who were brought before him for committing depredations in that country. Paul Liddy was the captain of a banditti, who levied contri-

\* One of the first fingers of that time.



butions in the part where the Knight lived. Among others, he wrote to Sir John, to inform him, that if he did not deposit a certain sum in the place he mentioned, at such a time, he would set fire to his house, murder him, and ~~rob~~ his lady.

Shortly after, by the vigilance of the Knight, the Captain was taken, and closely confined in Irons, in the Black-Dog prison. Lady St. Leger could not resist the curiosity of seeing a man, who had dared to make such a declaration. She accordingly went to the prison, where she was informed by the beautiful Monnica Gall, a courtesan whom Liddy had married, that he was too much indisposed to see any one. Upon which her Ladyship, with an insolence that reduced her below the level of the unhappy person she addressed, asked her, whether she was the villain's ~~consort~~ or his wife? To which the other immediately replied, "I have the misfortune to be his wife; the honour of being his ~~consort~~ was intended for your Ladyship."

Such was the elegant dame, with whom I was now become acquainted. Her Ladyship, requesting I would be of her party the next evening, I accordingly went, and found there a great many people, but no company, except Lady Harrington. As we were frequently on parties together, I desired the pleasure of her Ladyship's company and her daughter's at Hollywood, to which they consented. When they were there, Captain Shafroe told me to take care of the dame, as she possessed a great deal of art, under the masque of bluntness. I laughed at his surmises, and told him, that I should be obliged to any person who would take this comrade out of my sight. Our intimacy grew stronger, and I was surprized to hear that every thing that I said, was repeated with exaggeration to Mr. Calcraft. This indeed did not displease me, as I most cordially hated the person, who had destroyed all my hopes of happiness, and the sight of whom caused my greatest misery.

As soon as my new acquaintance left Hollywood, I set off for Blushing in my way to Brussels, on my proposed visit to Mrs. Child. The visit I had intended to Voltaire was prevented by the death of my introducer, the Mar-

quis de Verneuil. That accomplished nobleman, among other sciences, was skilled in alchemy. During a process on which he was very intent, an explosion happened, which cost him his life. And in this I lost another valuable friend. Before I set off, I left a letter for Mr. Calerisy, who was from home, wherein I reminded him of his promise to pay my debts, the only trifling reparation he could make me for the baseness of his conduct.

When I arrived at Brussels, I found Mrs. Childen, compassed with many of my intimates. The reception she gave me proved that my visit afforded her great satisfaction. She endeavoured, by every method in her power to make the place agreeable to me, to induce me to forget the unhappiness that preyed upon my mind. The Elector of Cologne was captivated with this lady's beauty, and showed himself a Prince in munificence as well as in dignity.

I will here give you some account of the city of Brussels, but as it can only be a cursory one, if you wish for more particulars, I must beg leave to refer you to those who write professedly upon the subject. This city deals in the number seven. There are seven parishes, seven capital streets, and they even descend to so minute a point in this singularity, that there are but seven midwives in the place. Upon a remarkable high steeple, there is an image of St. Michael killing the dragon, in copper gilt. The palaces are magnificent, and there is a park, somewhat like that of St. James's.

The buildings in general are grand. The opera house is the finest in Europe. You may travel for two pence, farthing an hour, in large covered boats called water-schuyts. These are drawn by one horse, and arrive at Brussels twice a day from Antwerp, returning each time. The most remarkable church here is that of St. Gunthildis. It is an old Gothic building, but finely ornamented within. There are many elegant monuments of illustrious princes in it. And, among many chapels, there is one, where they worship three Hosts, which, they say, were robbed by a Jew, and actually buried. These are exposed, upon every festival, in a chalice, richly adorned with jewels, and in the month of July there is an annual procession.

procession in memory of this stabbing. The inhabitants of Brussels va'ue themselves upon having entertained, at one time, seven crowned heads.

In this agreeable place I should have spent three happy months, but for corroding care. Reflection obtruded itself, at times, and imbibited my most cheerful hours. And the very idea of returning and entering once more the doors of my deserted mansion, made me the most miserable of human beings.

From Brussels I went to Antwerp. I took the opportunity of visiting that place, in order to make enquiries relative to the late Mr. Sykes's fortune, of his brother who resided there. Upon my arrival, I learnt that Mr. Sykes, (who besides his profession as a painter, kept a jeweller's and bijou shop) having had an invitation from the Duke de Berry, in order to make some alterations in his Grace's gallery, was gone to Paris. Some other great personage taking offence at Mr. Sykes's giving the Duke the preference to himself, had procured a *Lettre de cachet* against him. And as he was, one day, at the coffee-house, an exempt took him aside, and desired he would take an airing with him, in a coach which stood at the door, as far as the Bastille. It would have been in vain for him to resist, and equally as vain to enquire the reason. He had only time to request a gentleman of his acquaintance, who was in the room, to let his wife know the disaster. This his friend did, and it had such an effect upon her, that she lost her senses in consequence of it. Such being their unfortunate situation, it was much feared neither Mr. or Mrs. Sykes would ever return to their family more.

I was likewise informed, that the States General had taken possession of the late Mr. Sykes's effects at the Hague, which he had bequeathed to me; so that I had nothing further to hope from that quarter. As disappointments of this nature, from my want of knowing the value of money then, made but a transient impression on my mind; I received the information with becoming fortitude. And as it had never been in my possession, the loss sat the more lightly on me.



## LETTER LXIX.

June 23, 17--

THE beauty of the city of Antwerp, and the many curiosities it contains, determined me to stay a few days in it. On these, also, I shall content myself with giving you a few cursory and unconnected observations. The cathedral, which is dedicated to the Virgin Mary, is a noble pile of building; and the steeple of it is a beautiful piece of architecture. There are thirty-three bells, and two chimes in it, with a clock; together with a cross, at the top, of an incredible height. The trade-house is well worth viewing; as is Mere-street, wherein a brazen crucifix is placed upward of thirty feet high. There are twenty-two spacious squares in Antwerp. The number of streets I cannot recollect, but they are wide and numerous.

The churches are decorated with many capital pictures, by Rubens, and likewise by Quintin Matsys, a blacksmith, who commenced painter, in order to obtain for wife the daughter of a painter, who would give her hand to no person but one of his own profession. At the entrance of the cathedral, is placed an effigy of this true votary to the God of Love, with an inscription, implying that love made a blacksmith an Apelles. The chapel of the virgin, adjoining to the great church, is magnificent to a degree. The town is defended by a strong citadel erected by the Duke d'Alva, which commands not only the town, but the adjacent country. The people value themselves much upon their city's being the birth place of Abraham Ortelius, the great geographer.

I do not recollect in my whole life to have been ever struck with such a reverential awe as on entering the cathedral. My curiosity was scarcely gratified, when I saw a woman fix her eyes attentively upon me. Mrs. Walker, (formerly Mrs. Delany,) who had been my companion in this tour, was alarmed at the circumstance, from the remembrance of the incident I have already mentioned, relative to Sir Charles Hanbury Williams. As we could see only the eyes of the phantom, which were large and

wild, the rest of her person being enveloped in a large capote, there was some room for her apprehensions.

Having enquired of the servant that attended us, if I was not Miss Bellamy, upon his answering, Yes! she burst into an agony of tears, and cried out, "O my sister!" The church was crowded. And on this exclamation *Oh!* conveys the same idea in every language, the congregation supposed I had some how or other given offence to the person from whom it proceeded. Upon this they gathered round me, in order to learn the cause; and, I was apprehensive, to punish me for behaving ill in a place of divine worship; for my being better dressed than those around me, would have pleaded, I found, in my disfavour. But on the servant's informing them that it was only a beggar, they immediately vanished. For the people of that country look upon poverty as contagious, and leave the relief of it to strangers.

When the crowd was dispersed, the person who had occasioned their notice, stood silent, waiting for me to speak first. I therefore enquired who she was. She told me her name was Biddy Kendal, the daughter of Mrs. Kendal, whose assemblies I had frequented when I was in Dublin, and to whom I had been so kind. In one of my early letters to you I have mentioned this family. I recollected her immediately, and requested to know what was become of her sister Betty. Upon my repeating that name, she eagerly took hold of my hand, saying with the true Irish accent, "Come and see, my dear, I hope she is alive, though you will bless her poor eyes, which are almost blind with crying." She at the same time requested I would not go in a carriage, as she wished to avoid observation, and it would be impossible for a coach to get up to the door. She might have spared this part of her request, as I had not a carriage there.

We then went out of the church, and after many turnings and windings, arrived at the place of our destination. But such a wretched habitation I could not suppose to have been within the limits of that opulent and beautiful city. We went up something like a ladder into this steep place of misery. And such a scene never presented itself to my view before. The first thing which

struck

struck

struck my eyes was the corpse of a man, covered over with a rug, in a most shocking sight indeed to me. A little further, upon a wretched pallet, sat a skeleton of a woman, with scarcely any covering, wringing her hands, apparently in the most extreme anguish. Never did I behold a more perfect picture of despair. By her side lay an infant seemingly in the gasp of death, and another, in rags, about nine or ten years old, was warming something in a pipkin over a few charcoal embers, which were in an earthen chafing dish, whilst the tears trickled down its cheeks.

I stood for some moments, overwhelmed by the humane emotions that rushed impetuous from my heart's heart, as susceptible of the ills of others as of my own. The woman likewise seemed to sit absorbed in grief, and did not appear to observe us. Upon which, her sister going up to her, said, "Take comfort, Betty, here is Miss Bellamy come to see you." Without making any reply, she stared wildly, and instantly fell backward, to all appearance dead. Before I came in, I had sent my servant for some refreshments for them; of which having partaken, the person I thought dying soon recovered, and, to my great surprise, seemed now to be altogether as cheerful as she had a few minutes before been oppressed with misery. And what was more extraordinary, did not take the least notice of the poor, clay-cold corpse which lay near her. And, fearing to renew her agonies, I took care not to turn my eyes towards it.

My introducers now informed me, that her sister, having married an officer in the Irish brigade, was, with her husband and brother, shipwrecked, and had reason to fear they both perished. That she had the misfortune, by this event, to lose the whole of her property, but her life, and those of her two children, had been saved by one of the mariners, the person there lying dead, who was a native of Antwerp. That with great humanity the man had brought them to that lodging, where he had parted with his last shiver for their subsistence. And that the inconveniences he had experienced, from letting her sister have the lodging, had brought on an ague, of which he had died that morning.

Biddy



Biddy Kendal added, that a lady of quality having wrote to her to come to Spa, to be her companion, upon her arriving at Flushing she found a letter, acquainting her with the distress situation of her sister. Excited by humanity, as well as the calls of consanguinity, she had come to Antwerp; where she had expended every shilling, and parted with most of her cloaths, to support the unfortunate family. She concluded with telling me, that they were under great apprehensions, from not being able to inform the proper officers of the death of her sister's preserver; and likewise from the fear of being turned into the street penniless.

I was afraid, before I received this information, that the dead man had been Mrs. Bramsted's husband; (that was the name of the woman) so that I was not so much concerned when I found it was the mariner, who was a single man, and now gone to receive the reward of his humanity. The servant, who attended me on my tour, was an Italian by birth. He had formerly lived with me in England, but preferred travelling as *valet du voyage*, with persons who visited the Continent. Upon this occasion I called him in, and consulted him on what could be done. He told me he knew a person in the suburbs, who, he believed, would accommodate the family. And as for the dead corpse, a countryman of his worked for a person belonging to the police, to whom he would apply relative to the interment of it. This being approved of, my servant immediately set out, to carry the plan he had proposed into execution.

Whilst he was gone, I could not help taking notice, that gratitude did not make a part of those two ladies' good qualities. They appeared insensible to the fate of their benefactor, and shewed themselves true Irishwomen, by attending only to their own interest. I was so disgusted at the discovery of these selfish sentiments, that I proposed taking my leave as soon as possible. And this I accordingly did when my servant returned, who had agreed for board and lodging for the whole family at twelve ducats per month.

When I was going away, Mrs. Bramsted asked me if I recollected my little favourite Sally French? Upon my  
telling

telling her I did, she said, "She is much in the same situation with myself; only love engrosses *her* heart, and the cares of the world *mine*. When she has been married as long as I have, she will not be such a fool." If I was not much pleased before with the sentiments of my new-found friends, this did not give me a better opinion of them. She then proceeded to inform me, that the unfortunate girl she had mentioned had been induced to leave her uncle, on whom was all her dependance, by an officer who was going to join his regiment in Flanders. In his way he had called at Antwerp, to see a relation, a widow, who kept an hotel there. By this relation he was prevailed upon to desert his fellow traveller; which he accordingly did, early one morning, leaving only a letter for her, wherein he informed her, that she must now shift for herself. My informant concluded, by telling me, that Miss French was now become a prey to grief and despair; that she had refused all sustenance, and seemed determined to put an end to her miserable life, as an atonement for her folly.

As soon as I was told where I could find this unfortunate young girl, I hastened to her, leaving the sisters and children to go to their new residence; as their happiness seemed to centre merely in themselves. As I had not seen Miss French for many years, and she was very young when I knew her, it was hardly possible for me to recollect her; yet, as I had been uncommonly fond of her, and there was no very material alteration in my figure, she readily recognized me.

I found the unhappy girl in a decent apartment, and was struck with her appearance. She was indeed the most beautiful creature I ever saw. Her person was tall, and there was a dignity about her that commanded awe, as well as admiration. She knew my voice the moment I spoke, and thus accosted me, in a faint accent, "How good are you, my dear madam, to notice the most wretched being upon earth!" I desired her to compose herself; telling her, that I feared there were very many as wretched as herself; and that she ought to esteem herself happy that her seducer had left her before she had a young family. I then informed her, that I was come

to take her away with me. You may be sure she did not hesitate to accept of my offer. Her countenance, which had just been overclouded with grief, began to assume a cheerfulness; and the smile that succeeded, put me in mind of the sun, shining through an April shower. There being little to settle, as the wretch had paid for every thing previous to the day he had abandoned her, which was about a month, and grief had been the chief of her subsistence since, she was soon ready to accompany me.

I fear I have tired you with the relation of these two long stories. But as they are so interwoven with the circumstances of my life, and make a part of my adventures, I thought it necessary to insert them.

G. A. B.

## LETTER LXX.

July 5, 17—

**I**T is impossible to describe to you the insolence of the people belonging to the hotels in this city, or the exorbitance of their charges. Upon our return to that at which we had put up, I found the hostess greatly offended that I had not ordered dinner before I set out in the morning to view the place. Indeed I had totally forgot the circumstance. And the two *rencontres* I had met with, during my absence, had prevented my returning in time to do so.

As soon as I entered the hotel, I ran into a room, the door of which stood open, where an object presented itself to my view, that terrified me greatly. A large crucifix stood in a niche, opposite the window, and upon which a lamp reflected a dimly glimmering light. By this deceptive light the figure appeared to be animated; and my fancy, aided by my fears, represented it to my imagination as writhing in the agonies of death. My screams, upon beholding this spectacle, alarmed the whole house. Among the rest, appeared the good hostess, who, upon learning the occasion, coolly replied, I was not the first that had been terrified at the sight; but people who were so timorous, ought to burn lights constantly



in the room they sat in. To which she added, with the most insolent air imaginable, "I should not think, indeed, of persons taking up apartments in an hotel, without ordering what is necessary. But it shall make no difference; for I shall charge both meals together." This she accordingly did. And upon my attendant's finding fault with the enormous charge, she told him, with a supercilious smile, that it was well he had murmured instead of *me*; for if *I* had done it, she would have doubled the sum.

Could you have conceived such treatment possible in so large and populous a city? After paying this bill, I found I had but a few ducats left; which would go but a little way towards such unreasonable demands as I was here subject to. And what was to be done I knew not. I had nothing of value with me, being in mourning, but my watch, and an Agnes Dei, which had a diamond of some cost at the top of it. As the people of Antwerp are bigots to a degree, I thought I could readily dispose of the latter. This I determined to do, and immediately to set out for the Hague. In order to accomplish my plan, I called in my travelling attendant, who told me there would be no necessity for my disposing of the jewel, as he could procure me any sum I stood in need of, for my draft upon England.

This he did, and it happened very fortunately; as the poor girl I had taken under my protection became so extremely ill, that I was obliged to postpone my journey upon her account. The grief she had imbibed through the falsehood of her lover, the remains of affection for him; together with the sudden transition from the deepest despair, to the relief my notice afforded her; were, all united, too strong for her delicate frame; and she sunk under the accumulated burthen. I was so long detained at Antwerp by this incident, that I found it necessary to defer my visit to the Hague, especially, as I had received a letter from England, informing me that the theatre was to open early in September.

From the situation of mind I was in with regard to Mr. Calcraft, I could have wished never to return. My home was become so hateful to me, that nothing could

have induced me to revisit it, but the impulses of maternal affection, and the certainty of finding all my pecuniary affairs settled. I, however, at length, set out on my return, but we were obliged to travel very slowly, as Miss French's indisposition increased daily; and to so great a height had it attained in a fortnight, that, from the inexpressibly beautiful form I have already described, she was become a frightful skeleton.

Upon my arrival in England, I was distressed beyond measure at finding that Calcraft, who was then at Marlborough, had not kept his promise as to my debts. Having depended upon him, I had not thought it necessary to acquaint my creditors with my going abroad, which I should otherwise have done, as some of them were rather uneasy, having heard we were not upon the best terms. It therefore became needful, to make my engagement at the theatre, which I had lately entered into, publicly known in the newspapers. This was sufficient to quiet the apprehensions of those to whom I was indebted; but it was not satisfactory to me. I was much mortified at being obliged to have recourse to such duplicity.

Upon this occasion, I applied for advice to my constant friend at Somerset-House, Lady Tyrawley; and her ladyship encouraged me to form a resolution to quit his house, if Mr. Calcraft did not pay my debts. When he returned to town from Marlborough, dreading the eclat which he expected would take place between us, he pretended to be ill. At least I thought his indisposition to be only pretence; for when a person is once found guilty of a deception, we are apt to suspect all their actions.

Nothing is so dreadful to a liberal mind, as being obliged to solicit a favour from a person, towards whom, for some reason or other, we entertain a dislike. Cruel necessity, however, now compelled me to do this. Yet as I always esteemed a promise a debt; and most of those obligations I wanted him to discharge, were entered into upon his account; I thought I had a right to demand from Mr. Calcraft the fulfilment of his. I therefore went down to the office one day, and with more warmth than he had ever seen me animated by before, insisted on his

his performing this part of his agreement. I upbraided him for the neglect of it, in such a determined manner, that there remained no room for him to doubt of my immediately quitting his house, if my demand was not complied with.

He urged in his defence, that he had lost a great deal of money; that he had purchased two estates; and that he had expended considerable sums for Lord Granby. Through these united drains, he said, he was really distressed. He told me, he had been in hopes that Miss Meredith's legacy had made me tolerably easy, as it was seventeen hundred pounds without the jewels. I reminded him of the debt for twelve hundred pounds which was to be deducted out of it. And I then informed him, that I believed I owed, besides, about three thousand or somewhat more, but Clifford was a better judge than myself of the particulars. I concluded with assuring him that I *would* have paid them.

He shook his head, and said it was a large sum; but if I could put off the payment till my benefit, he would set me clear, upon my promising never more to incur any debts. I told him, I disliked conditions; but if he would take off the rent charge from me of his brother and sister, I would consent. He must know, I continued, that this was no inconsiderable matter, as it was shameful in him to confine the expences of a young man, in so expensive a line as that of the guards, to his pay; and a young woman, who was obliged to appear as a gentlewoman, to fifty pounds a year. I then delivered him a bill of Woodfield's for wine, which was had when I kept the house, and wine was not to be included in the articles I was to pay for. He immediately called for a check, and gave me a draft upon his banker for the sum. This I delivered instantly into the hands of Mr. Willis, the clerk who brought the check, and desired he would call and discharge the bill. It was accordingly discharged the same day. My mind was now somewhat easier. Notwithstanding which, as I could not entertain any less disgustful sentiments of the master of the house, home was still as hateful as ever to me.



Upon my return from the Continent, I found that my new acquaintance, Miss St. Leger, was married, and at variance with her mother. This prevented our ever meeting, but once upon a very disagreeable occasion; and being obliged, some time after, to desire the Lady to be silent, one night at the Theatre, when she was too vociferous.

About this time, Lady Caroline Keppel was taken dangerously ill; which threw her whole family, as well as Lady Caroline Fox, into the greatest distress. That amiable young lady was ordered, like myself, to Bristol to die; but she was almost as miraculously restored to health there as I had been. Mr. Adair, who had afterwards the happiness of calling Lady Caroline his wife, declared upon this occasion, that he really thought that Lady and myself *immortal*; as it was not in the power of such severe indispositions as we had both been afflicted with, to destroy us. He however found to his cost, that her ladyship was mortal. For she fell a sacrifice a short time after to her affectionate regard for her sister, Lady Tavistock. Impelled by that to accompany her sister to Portugal, before she herself was recovered from an illness under which she had laboured, her anxiety, and her unremitting care of the dear lady she attended, robbed her also of her life; a life which was esteemed invaluable by all who had the happiness of knowing her.

My theatrical expectations, this season, were far from pleasing. Most of those ladies who had usually honoured me with their encouragement at the Theatre, being either indisposed, gone abroad, or dead, it made a material difference in my situation, and foreboded but an indifferent season. My political connections seemed to present me with a prospect no less discouraging. Mr. Fox *injudiciously* accepted the seals. I say *injudiciously*, because in that office he would be circumscribed. It was with great difficulty he was persuaded to accept of them. And a very remarkable circumstance attended it. He was *three times* minister, and as often a private gentleman, in *twenty-four hours*.

The War Office most severely felt his translation; as there never was a person in any department of the state that

that acquitted himself with more credit, or gave more universal satisfaction. His attention extended even to the minutest affair, and was unremitting. No officer had occasion to leave him twice. Upon their first application, he immediately informed them whether their expectations could be answered.

It must naturally be supposed that a person of Mr. Fox's great political genius, and unlimited understanding, could not feel himself happy in a situation where he was cramped by a man possessed of no other qualification but that of knowing how to give a good dinner. It was too late for him, however, to retract, when he had once yielded to the ill-timed persuasions which over-ruled his judgment; and he found himself obliged to bustle through the blunders daily committed by his coadjutor. The administration he was engaged in, was, besides, unfortunate. A chain of unforeseen events, exclusive of the unlucky naval disappointment, and the fatal catastrophe which afforded Mr. Pitt occasion to give so striking a specimen of his eloquence, tended to make it so.

Mr. Calcraft's ambition took the alarm on his *not* being appointed secretary to his patron. That gentleman gave the secretaryship to his nephew, the honourable Mr. Digby; to Calcraft's great disappointment and vexation. The ties of gratitude, notwithstanding its uncommonly forcible claims from him, were greatly weakened in his breast upon this occasion. He could not conceal his disgust. Upon my remonstrating with him on the subject, and representing to him how unqualified he was to sit in Parliament, I discovered that he had pleased himself with the thoughts of making a figure in St. Stephen's chapel. To evade the regulation which prevented agents from sitting in the house, I found, he proposed making over the agency for his regiments to his two principal clerks, reserving the greatest part of the emoluments to himself.

When I heard this, I could not refrain from being a little sarcastic. I told him, I made no doubt but that he would know, when he got into the house, which side to take his seat on; yet, in my opinion, he was totally disqualified from being any thing more than a *Yea and Nay*

*Man.*

*Man.* He was much offended at the supposition, and made me the following *sensible and florid* reply: "I am young enough to learn. I have been *Fag* long enough, and will not be any body's slave no longer." I know not which surpris'd me most, his insolence, his phraseology, or his absurdity; and I could not withhold from saying, that I was sorry I had taken any pains to prevent his appearing to the world, the most ungrateful monster in the universe. That he must expect, if he proceeded in his foolish schemes, to be detested by every rational being. And I could not help concluding my animadversions with repeating that expressive line of Dryden's,

He that's ungrateful has no crime but one.

As I had collected, whilst I thus address'd him, all the contempt and indignation an offended woman could call to her aid, in my manner, look, and voice, he shuddered as if a gorgon had presented itself to his view; and, for the time, seem'd to adopt my opinion. But his behaviour afterwards prov'd, that this concession was only design'd as a masque to hide his intentions from me, and to free himself from my future rebukes.

The seeds of that foulest of the mental imperfections, ingratitude, were thickly sown in his heart.—As Timon says of his friends, "The fellow had his ingratitude in him hereditary."—I dare say, the sweet song of the immortal master of the passions, upon this subject, *Blow, blow, thou winter's wind*, occurs to your memory here; as it does to mine.—Nothing can be more applicable—"The winter's wind is not, indeed, so unkind as man's ingratitude—its tooth is not so keen, because it is not seen, although its breadth be rude—nor do the freezings of the bitter sky bite near so nigh as benefits forgot."

## LETTER LXXI.

July 11, 17—

**I** STAND corrected.—I have, indeed, more than once received your approbation of my digressive sallies.—I have likewise been honoured with your express injunctions



tions to pursue my little wanderings from the beaten track of narrative, on condition that I do not keep out of the road so long as to lead the imagination too far from the principal subject.—Thus encouraged, I will not again apologize, but suffer my pen to take its course.—*Allez vous done, ma plume.*

Every thing now conspired to add to my vexatious situation. And these constant agitations of mind impaired my health; so that I was but seldom able to make my appearance at the theatre. The death of Miss French also affected me much, notwithstanding it was an event to be expected; and it would have been cruelty to wish a life prolonged, which, from the corroding reflections and delicate sensations it must always have been a prey to, could never hope for tranquillity. This once sweet and lovely girl expired, without a groan, one day as we sat at dinner. Upon this occasion I might, with propriety, once more make use of Gay's descriptive phrase, and say, that "She bow'd her head, and died."

From this incident, I am convinced, that it is situation which often causes the effect. Sensations receive their birth rather from circumstances than from the events themselves. For as there was an irremovable bar placed between this young lady and happiness, had she expired in her apartment, it would not have excited either surprise or grief. But to make her exit during the conviviality of the festive board, was so unaccustomed an accident, that it threw a damp upon the surrounding spectators, and greatly added to the horror naturally attendant on the dissolution of a human being. I afterwards learned, that the wretch, to whose villainy this fair flower owed her untimely fall, was broke for cowardice. A certain proof, that none but dastards can treat a weak, defenceless, unsuspecting, believing woman, with such inhumanity.

Besides the distress I experienced in my family, the ill success of public affairs gave me equal uneasiness. Baiting a minister was no uncouth thing; but the most palpable falsehoods were not wanting to calumniate the present. Mr. Fox was made accountable for the errors of others. It had been thought necessary to engage foreign

troops for the internal defence of the kingdom. This was a spacious field for the great orator to rove in, and give free scope to his unbridled power of eloquence. Among other unhackneyed expressions, he made use of the following:—He wished the motion might prove a mill-stone about the mover's neck, to drag him to the lower regions. The event of the measure is well known.

At length, worn out with repeated disappointments and incessant abuse, this great man resigned the seals. Had he been permitted to act alone, as his successor was, I have no doubt but he would have guided the helm with as much success as he did.

Mr. Pitt now adopted the very plan that his predecessor had been stigmatized for. *America was to be conquered in Germany.* Upon a motion he made in the house for that purpose, Mr. Fox arose, and said, "I am happy the Right Honourable Gentleman has retracted the opinion he has hitherto maintained. And I sincerely wish, that what he hoped would prove a mill-stone about my neck, might become a brilliant, equal, if not superior, to that of his namesake's \*, to grace his hat withal." The manner, in which this wish was delivered, added greatly to the thought. It seemed to point out the variableness of Mr. Pitt's political tenets, in direct opposition to his own, which had been always invariable, and fixed as the needle to the pole.

I now grew weary both of my political attachments and my theatrical engagements. And, at the conclusion of the season, I proposed retiring to the Continent, as I made no doubt of Mr. Calcraft's paying my debts. But in this expectation I was once more disappointed. For as soon as the season was over, he waited upon Lady Tyrawley, and informed her, that a very great loss had put it out of his power to exonerate me from my debts at present. He therefore requested her Ladyship to intercede with me, to have patience till the ensuing season. He then offered to join with me in a bond to Sparks, for the four hundred pounds I owed him.

Governor Pitt, commonly called *Diamond Pitt*.

I supposed

I supposed he had received a list from Clifford of the whole of my debts; but as he never purposed to pay them, he deemed that an unnecessary trouble. As I could not imagine that he would endeavour to impose a falsehood upon a lady who was herself a miracle of truth, I submitted to his proposal, and joined in the execution of the bond to Mr. Sparks, which has never been paid to this hour.

I now borrowed two thousand pounds upon my jewels, of Bibby, a pawnbroker, in Stanhope-street, Clare Market; and adding this to the money I had received at my benefit, paid my creditors as far as it would go; reserving only two hundred pounds for the exigencies of my intended journey to the Hague. I had been prevented, as I have already informed you, from visiting that place last summer, and I now was determined to do it. I was the more anxious to quit the kingdom, as company was grown disagreeable to me. My spirits were so depressed, that I could not keep up the ball of conversation as usual. At the same time I did not wish to have my dejection perceived, lest it should lead to a suspicion of the cause. I could not bear the thoughts that my situation should be even guessed at. I was as cautious in this respect, as if I myself had been guilty of the cruel deception, which had been practised upon me—as if the unhappiness I laboured under proceeded from *my own* imprudence, and not the villany of *another*.

I set out according to my intention for Holland, and arrived at Amsterdam, without any circumstance occurring worthy of relating. In this city I was advised, by my former travelling attendant, *John*, who likewise accompanied me during my present tour, to make a stay of a few days. As I repeated to you a few of the observations I made in my last excursion, and they met with a favourable reception, I shall do the same now.

Amsterdam is a very populous place. The houses are handsomely built, and the streets are remarkably clean. There are many churches of all persuasions in it, but none are permitted the use of bells, but those belonging to the Calvinists, which is the established religion. The chapels amount to twenty-seven. Among these, there is  
a kind



a kind of monastery, the nuns of which are not confined to the strict rules of others, but allowed to marry, if they please. The air of the city is far from being pure, owing to the fogs that frequently obscure it.

The current coin is guilders, in value about two shillings. The industry of the inhabitants is incredible. To see a person idle in Amsterdam, would be a miracle. The trade of this place is greater than that of any other part in Europe, the vast commerce which is carried on by the Dutch to the East Indies centering here. It abounds with hospitals, besides which there are boxes, for the benefit of the poor, hung up in different parts of the city, the produce of which is distributed every quarter of a year by the overseers. The play-houses pay half their profits to the indigent.

The exchange is one of the greatest ornaments. The gates of the city are shut up every night at a quarter past twelve, and every person coming in after that hour pays an additional penny for the poor. The houses of correction are worth viewing. Those who are confined in them rasp and saw Brazil wood. And the indolent are punished in a very extraordinary manner. They are shut up in a place, into which the water flows, so that they are obliged to pump incessantly to preserve themselves from drowning. Their public schools are much talked of, but I had not an opportunity of viewing them. There are four sluices which open into the Wye, where there are beautiful walks planted with trees. And on the Wye there is one, which commands a very extensive prospect. In different parts of the city are a great number of mills for sawing of wood, for polishing of marble, and for making gunpowder, &c.

Here we resided a week. But the length of our residence was more owing to the badness of the weather, than to any prepossession in favour of the place. For the people are too busy to be civil. And though, from the extensiveness of its trade, Amsterdam might justly be stiled the grand cenforium of commerce and opulence, yet I never was in any place that I would not prefer to it as the place of my abode.

At the Hague you get, as it were, into another world. There the people are altogether as polite; and particularly so to strangers. Many of the streets and public places are spacious and airy. The buildings, in general, are grand, and the air is pure. This I experienced as soon as I approached it, as I had found a difficulty in breathing at Amsterdam. I had letters of recommendation to Mr. Van Heij's family, which made my stay at the Hague very agreeable.

The palace at Opdam is the most magnificent. The Prince of Orange has a house here, but it is not, in my opinion, equal to that of the Deputies of Amsterdam. The town-house is a very handsome building. In the front of it is a motto in Latin, which means, that it is not in the power of Jupiter himself to please every one. The great church fronts the town-house, which has nothing belonging to it to excite curiosity but a very high steeple. The principal street, called the *Prince Graft*, is most beautiful indeed. A fine canal, adorned with trees, runs through it. The buildings are sumptuous, and are chiefly inhabited by people of quality.

The environs are pleasant, particularly the wood, which is situated at a little distance from the town, and where there is a palace belonging to the Prince of Orange. They have a legend here, that Margaret, daughter of the Count of Holland and Zeland, was delivered of three hundred and sixty-five children at a birth. I resided in this delightful town six weeks; and the great civilities I received during that time, are still imprinted on my memory. Excuse this cursory, unconnected account of the places I visited. You will readily perceive that the observations were made, and are now written, in haste.

Upon my return to England, I was invited to engage once more with Mr. Rich. But Barry being gone to Ireland, I did not choose to hazard the reputation I had gained on the stage, by playing to empty benches. Accordingly, as I made no doubt of my debts being soon paid by Mr. Calcraft, declined any agreement. My health was perfectly established, but a gloom had taken possession of my mind that I could not get rid of. I flew to dissipation for relief; but that proved a vain resource, especially

especially as the cause of that gloom resided under the roof with me—*Dissipation* ever proves a vain remedy for a wounded mind—It might indeed, (if I may be allowed to use the word when speaking of an immaterial substance) *cicatrize* the wound, spread over it a seeming healthy skin, and give a delusive glow to the countenance; but under these appearances, the ailment will still rankle, and need a different treatment. Sufferings are alone to be alleviated by a patient resignation to the will of heaven; and the only cure for them is *Hope*.

I had an offer, about this time, from Mr. Woodward, of joining Mr. Barry and himself at their theatre, Crow Street, Dublin, in which they had a joint concern. This gentleman was indiscreet enough, upon some trifling quarrel with Mr. Garrick, to embark a fortune of eleven thousand pounds in a theatrical adventure with Barry, who not only was without a shilling, but greatly incumbered with debts. As the first step towards getting rid of his money, a new theatre was to be built.

Mr. Mossop had engaged another theatre there in opposition to theirs. And as I had been so caressed and flattered at Dublin, in my younger days, it was naturally to be supposed that the success I had since met with on the London theatres would enhance my value, and make me a desirable acquisition to any house I should appear at. In answer to Mr. Woodward's application, which was by letter, I informed him, that at the distance of so many months I could not come to any resolution relative to his proposals; but if I visited Ireland, I would most certainly give him the preference. G. A. B.

## LETTER LXXII.

July 18, 17—

**A**T this time, the celebrated Madam Bruna made a visit to England, in order to try if she could not recover some part of an estate her grandfather had forfeited, in the reign of King William. The Marquis de Abrio, ambassador from the court of Spain, who had succeeded General Wall, was captivated by her voice. And as his Excellency was intimate at my house, and knew my



my passion for music, he introduced this lady to me. I was so fascinated by her musical powers, that every hour she could spare she complaisantly passed with me in Parliament Street.

Though Shakespeare says, "there's nought so stockish, "hard, and full of rage, but music for the time doth "change his nature;" yet, as I have said before, Calcraft was an exception to this rule. He so disliked harmony, that whenever the sound reached his ear, he directly went abroad. This, added to the gratification of my passion for music, induced me to have frequent concerts; and some of the first ladies honoured me with their company upon these occasions. This syren was so much admired, that whenever she chose to enchant her hearers, the Spanish ambassador's house, as well as mine, were crowded. I was now never at home, except when I had parties, which prevented Mr. Calcraft and me from meeting, but now and then at dinner.

On New Year's Day, I had always a concert and ball. This year, Mr. Calcraft, in consideration of my not having any theatrical engagement, sent me a hundred guineas by the house steward. I own I was greatly surprised at this unexpected fit of generosity. And, though it was very inadequate to the expences of the day, as I had the first performers at the concert, and a great number of ladies as visitors, together with the foreign ministers, I accepted of it. The unfortunate Count de Bathmore, minister from the court of Denmark, opened the ball with the Countess of Harrington. And the three young ladies, who vied with the three Graces, followed their lovely mother.

The night was spent in festivity, which was in a great measure owing to the absence of the master of the mansion. He had, as I afterwards learned, formed, at this time, a connection with a lady who had been my most intimate acquaintance. It was with some degree of surprise, that I heard every thing I said of Mr. Calcraft repeated with exaggeration by my woman. She was perpetually throwing out hints of his new engagement. But as his amours could not concern me, I turned a deaf ear to them. In these repetitions there were many unnecessary exaggerations.

ations. For as my aversion to him was confirmed, and I always valued myself upon my sincerity, what I said of him needed no addition.

When I went to my own apartment, after the ball, Clifford, who was ready to burst with the secret, wished me joy of the hundred guineas. To which she added, that her master had been much afraid I should not have had my usual entertainment that day. Upon my enquiring why? she said, if I had not, he would have been deprived of the opportunity of keeping his assignation with my good friend, mentioning her name. At first, I laughed at the absurdity of the supposition; but upon her still persisting in it, I grew angry; as the person she mentioned was a married woman.

At length, she informed me, that if I would be at the pains to convince myself of the truth of what she had told me, I might very soon do it; as she knew their place of rendezvous, and would attend me. With regard to the gentleman, he had my free permission to engage himself wherever he thought proper. But as the lady had enjoyed my confidence, and been mistress of every thing I possessed, I could not so easily reconcile myself to her treachery. I was now no longer at a loss to account for the many stories I had heard repeated to my disadvantage. But the perpetual round of engagements I was involved in, made me forget for a time the information I had received.

One evening, however, Clifford came to me, and informed me, that if I would go to a certain house in Leicester Square, I might be satisfied of the truth of what she had told me, by being an eye-witness to their meeting. I accordingly set out with her, and was convinced, from ocular demonstration, that my female friend was one of the most worthless of women.

Mr. Calcraft, alarmed lest I should divulge the affair, which might bring on a prosecution from the injured husband, came directly home, in order to prevail upon me to be silent. But I was gone to Madam Bruna's; despising both the lady and the gentleman too much to trouble myself about them. Shame, avarice, and, I have reason to believe, *disgust*, made him avoid me for some time

time after the discovery. But this I was not in the least displeased at, as I had come to a resolution to leave his house.

Notwithstanding what had happened, I entertained no doubt but that he would keep the promise he had so often made to me, and so solemnly repeated to Lady Tyrawley. During the last three months of my residing in Parliament Street, we did not meet above twice. At the expiration of the time when the money was to be paid, I went to my much-loved adviser at Somerset House. Since I had informed that lady of my *real* situation, she had redoubled her regard for me. My having been *deceived* into a connection with a man I could neither love nor esteem, secured me her compassion. As she saw that the uncertainty of my fate made me truly wretched, her ladyship advised me not to delay coming to an éclaircissement; and if Mr. Calcraft prevaricated in the least, to quit the house immediately.

Though prudence dictated that it would not be proper to leave Parliament Street till he had fulfilled his promise, I resolved to set off the next morning for Bristol, if he made the *least* demur. I therefore, as soon as I returned from Lady Tyrawley's, ordered Clifford to seal up the receipts of Maifoneuve, Deard, and Lazarus, the persons of whom I had purchased my jewels. These amounted to six thousand pounds, exclusive of those left me by Miss Meredith, and which, as her legacy, I could not part with. I further gave her directions to order a chaise and four to be ready at six o'clock, and to pack up what would be necessary for my journey.

It was very uncommon for Mr. Calcraft and myself to dine alone. But we then fortunately sat down *à tête-à-tête*. Mrs. Walker, who knew my intention, purposely absented herself upon the occasion. She was prepared as well as myself for the journey, as we neither of us had the least expectation of his performing his promise, notwithstanding Lady Tyrawley was so sanguine.

There is not in nature so difficult a task, as to prevail upon one's self to solicit a favour from a being we hate. Even to receive an obligation *unasked* is disagreeable. To ask it was peculiarly grating to my mind, as pecuniary subjects



subjects were ever, as I have already informed you, discordant to my soul. These sentiments spread an unaccustomed gravity over my countenance. This could not pass unobserved by him; and he enquired whether I was indisposed? Upon my answering, yes! he was good enough to ask of what nature my disorder was. To which I replied, "The very worst that can oppress a wretch; I am overwhelmed with debt, and deceived beyond a possibility of reparation."

He then commented upon my extravagance. Told me that my late hours affected my health, and consequently made me low spirited. Said, that I enjoyed every pleasure the world could afford. And concluded with assuring me, that with regard to my debts, he would be satisfied I had some regard for him, before he parted with so capital a sum. After this, he muttered something I did not, at that time, well understand.

To all this I replied, that considering the terms we had been upon since I had discovered the cruel deception he had made use of to ruin me, he could not possibly have any right to censure my conduct; nor did I think myself, in any shape, accountable to him. And as to regard for him, I neither had, nor ever could, profess what was foreign from my soul. I told him, that what I now required of him, was only the performance of a promise, which I claimed as a debt. A promise which he ought to consider as binding, had *not* the bills to be discharged been for what was consumed in his house and by his company; but as knew that to be really the case, it must certainly render the obligation stronger. I then demanded an immediate and positive answer. To this, however, without any hesitation, he gave a negative.

Upon which, I very calmly, but bestowing upon him, at the same time, a smile of the most ineffable contempt, asked him if he would lend me the sum of two thousand four hundred pounds upon my jewels, which were pledged. I mentioned that sum, as the interest had accumulated, and I had no money to take me to Bristol. I then produced the duplicate. He made no objection to the advance of two thousands pounds, but the four hundred he demurred at. Less I told him would not do.

At

At last he gave Mr. Willis, the clerk I have often mentioned, the money, upon my producing the jeweller's receipts.

When this was done, I requested that he would dispose of the jewels as soon as he could, and having repaid himself the money he had now advanced, let me have the overplus to pay my creditors, as far as it would go; for I could do very well with the diamonds I had, or without any, rather than to be asked for money that was justly due. He gave me upwards of an hundred, and seemed very happy to have a deposit in his hands, worth three times the sum he had advanced. Nor was it the least part of his pleasure that he had me easy at so cheap a rate.

The chaise came to the door at the time it was ordered; and as my daughter was to return, the same evening, to Camden House, where she went to school, Mr. Calcraft might naturally suppose the carriage was for that purpose; but upon his observing four horses and a trunk behind, he remarked that this was unnecessary for so short a way. To which I replied, that I was going a great way; for I proposed lying at Reading that night. And as the horses were my own, I certainly had a right to make use of them. At hearing this, his colour, which was generally very florid, became in an instant pale as death. He, however, handed me to the carriage with the most calm, and apparently unaffected indifference. I then bid him adieu; saying, We should never, *I hoped*, meet again.

When I got into the chaise, the sensations I felt could not be exceeded by those of a wretch reprieved from condign punishment. Though deeply involved in debt, and without one pleasing prospect, I never in my life experienced such unimbittered joy. The parting from my daughter was indeed some abatement of it when I could collect my thoughts, but as I intended a speedy return, I hoped soon to see her again at the school, though not at her father's. And as I was accustomed to be separated from her, it was but a momentary pang.

At Salt-hill I met Mr. Fox, to whom I related the whole of what had happened. He blamed me for leaving the house before I was quite clear; and earnestly requested

requested that I would return. He informed me that Mr. Calcraft had hinted at my having, for some time past, entertained a partiality towards another; and my quitting his house so suddenly, he said, would tend to confirm his suspicions. As I was conscious there was not the least foundation for such a surmise, it doubly incensed me against the entertainer of it; and determined me never to see or hold any communication with a man, who added calumny to the irreparable injuries he had done me; and that merely to avoid paying what in justice and equity he was obligated to do.

Permit me here to add to what I have already said on this subject, that I cannot help thinking our laws are very deficient, in not making a promise as valid as a bond. --As to myself, I esteem it much more binding. In the former I consider myself as obliged to the person who accepts it, for placing a confidence in my honour. The sense of the obligation dwells upon my mind, and stimulates me to the performance of it. As in love or friendship we are obliged to the persons who think us worthy of their attention; so in a promise, I am doubly indebted to those who gave me credit for the fulfilling it.

Upon my arrival at Bristol, I received a letter from Mr. Mossop, with very advantageous offers. In my answer I informed him of my promise to Mr. Woodward, which obliged me to give him the preference. And soon after I wrote to Messrs. Woodward and Barry, to let them know that my terms would be a thousand guineas for the season, and two benefits. But receiving *no answer* from them, I accepted of Mr. Mossop's proposal, *upon the same terms*. That gentleman brought the agreement down to me, and the honourable Mr. Beresford was his surety.

When Mr. Mossop returned to London, he thought himself so happy in the acquisition he had made to his company, that he mentioned it every where. The news soon reached Mr. Calcraft. Alarmed at it, he wrote to Lord Tyrawley, who was then at Bath, requesting that he would come over to Bristol to me, and endeavour to prevail upon to me to return to him. He, at the same time, offered me, by his Lordship, a *charte blanche*.

My



My good friend, Quin, and General Honeywood, attended his Lordship in this visit.

My Lord made use of every argument in his power, to influence me to accept of Mr. Calcraft's proposals. And my second father united his influence, which was not in the least abated, with that of his Lordship; but I was inflexible. I had not an opportunity of acquainting Lord Tyrawley with the real cause of this apparent obstinacy; but as the penalty of my engagement with Mossop was in the sum of two thousand pounds, I knew it was scarcely to be expected, that a man, who, instigated by avarice, had repeatedly broken the most solemn promises, would engage to pay such an additional sum.

But had he consented to make over to me the whole of his fortune, unless induced by my affection for my children, I would not have accepted of it. For though passion was but a bad excuse for the unpardonable deceptions he made use of to get possession of me, yet it was *some* excuse. Whereas no palliation could be urged for his meanness, and repeated breaches of faith, in not exonerating me from my debts. This had so deeply rooted my contempt for him, that whatever offers he could make, deserved, and received, a rejection.

Before Lord Tyrawley and his companions left me, Mr. Quin laid me a wager of one hundred guineas, that I should not go to Ireland. Which, on his losing the wager, he afterwards sent me, without my reminding him of it; but what was of much greater value to me than the money, he accompanied it with a letter containing assurances of his *unalterable* friendship. And, indeed, it only ended with his life.

G. A. B.

The

The following Letter is referred to in Vol. I. dated April 29, 17—. It bears this singular address: "To Miss Bellamy in England". As it is much defaced by time\*, there are several breaks in it, but it is given in its present state, and at the same time *verbatim et literatim*.

" I Rec<sup>d</sup> my Dearest Miss Bellamy Letter at Last:  
 " after her long silence, indeed I was very Jealous  
 " with you, but you make me amen's in Letting me hear  
 " from you now, it gives me great Joy & all our faimely  
 " to hear that y<sup>r</sup> D<sup>r</sup> mama and you Dearest self are in  
 " perfect Health to be sure all y<sup>r</sup> Relations where fighting  
 " to see which of them shod have you first and Longest  
 " with y<sup>m</sup>. I hope you are amost tird of england, &  
 " that we shall soon have your sweet company in Ireland,  
 " where you will be heartily welcome, it gives me vast  
 " pleasure to hear you haves thoughts of coming over,  
 " my Lady ————— To be sure I dont wonder at  
 " it, for you know her heart & soul was rapit up in his,  
 " as to hows bing the next heir I believe it will be how  
 " my Lord pleases, he is in ye Country & my Lady is  
 " with us she cant go to her own house I belive she will  
 " go strait to england to Miss Bour, I was very unfortu-  
 " nate to be in the country when our Vaux Hall was,  
 " if I was in town I sho'd be thear & I belive I shond be  
 " much more delighted than at a publicker deversion, I  
 " am quit alterd since I saw you, there is nothing I Love  
 " so much as solitude; I dont belive it was Mr. Knox  
 " you read of at Bath. for he is hear and pray write me  
 " word when you saw or heard from Mr. Crump. ———  
 " is out Town this tow months past every ——— in the  
 " Country, Dublin is y<sup>e</sup> stupites place ——— in the  
 " world I hope ye winter will be more ——— tho I  
 " see know great Liklihood of it, for I believe Sheredian  
 " can get no body to play with him is doing all he can to  
 " get frinds for him ses to be sure you have hread he is  
 " marrd for firtain to Miss Chamberlan a sweet pare,  
 " Papa & mama & Miss Betty & Miss Kittys sincer love  
 " and comp<sup>s</sup> to y<sup>u</sup> & y<sup>r</sup> mama y<sup>r</sup> Littel Husband sends

\* The original is in the hands of the publisher.

"you ten Thousand kisses he whistles he had you hear  
 "to give y<sup>m</sup> to you he says they wo<sup>d</sup> be swe—  
 "Lips than on paper without making—  
 "Comp<sup>s</sup> he shakes me so I cant write—Miss  
 "Bellamy will excuse this—

"I must bid a due & shall only say I am

"my D<sup>r</sup> your ever affec<sup>nat</sup>

"Dublin august 31.

"M. GUNNING.

"Mr<sup>s</sup> Jussy begs leave to give her comp<sup>s</sup> to you, &  
 "is rejoyes'd to hear you are well, she is in a very bad  
 "state of health."

### LETTER LXXIII.

July 25, 17—

**M**Y journey from Bristol to Chester was very disagreeable, as it was across the country, and through bad roads. When I got to that city, I met my servants, together with all my paraphernalia, plate, and every thing but the money I expected for the overplus of my jewels. Mr. Calcraft wrote to me; but he took no notice of what alone could have made his letter agreeable. As the epistle is rather a curious one, I will copy it. Young gentlemen may learn from it how to write to their sweethearts.

"Christ Jesus God, why do you keep me in this torment. If you will not write, tell me so, and make me completely miserable. I have had a letter from my Lord, and have seen that to your maid; by which I find you are unalterable in your resolution. I hate Hollwood, and every place which reminds me how happy I have been in your company. Caroline has almost broke my heart with shewing me the sweet letter which accompanied your sailing. Every body is made happy but me; but vexation and the gout will soon relieve you from the man you hate. I have ordered the plate, your new sedan, and books to be sent you. I have sent you the parchment I have found,  
 "which



"which I suppose is the counterpart of your annuity;  
 "but depend upon it, I shall not think it sufficient for  
 "your support. For God's sake write to me, and be  
 "assured whilst I have breath, I am affectionately yours.

Signed,

"JOHN CALCRAFT."

The parchment mentioned in the above letter, was that given me by Mr. Davy, the person who had lent me the five hundred pounds. It was a writing to show that I had only sold the annuity conditionally. Mr. Calcraft's barefaced meanness in pretending to be ignorant of what he had before upbraided me with, increased, if possible, my disgust and contempt.

Unfortunately for me, I kept these feelings, with the injuries which occasioned them, a secret from every body but Lady Tyrawley. Whilst my former friend, the person who had succeeded me in Mr. Calcraft's affection, propagated innumerable falsehoods against me. As she possessed a fertile genius, she was able to clothe them with an appearance of plausibility, which made them believed; and my silence gave her every advantage over me. My extravagance furnished her with a fund of calumny. Nor was this the worst. It was industriously reported, that I entertained a partiality for a man I scarcely knew; and that this was the cause of my leaving Mr. Calcraft. So improbable a story, I think, could hardly gain belief. For, had that been the case, I should certainly have staid in London, where my imagined lover was, rather than have removed to so great a distance from him.

But to what lengths will not malevolence and the love of slander carry some people! How finely, and at the same time how *justly*, has Shakespear described this propensity, in the following lines!

—Slander

Whose edge is sharper than the sword; whose  
 tongue

Out-venoms all the worms of Nile; whose breath  
 Rides on the posting winds, and doth belie

All corners of the world, kings, queens, and states,  
 Molds,

Maids, matrons; nay, the secrets of the grave  
This viperous slander enters\*.—

Instead of being able to indulge any tender emotions, the mortification and disgust I had so long been a prey to, entirely engrossed my thoughts. I had not even the slightest idea of forming another connection. Not that I thought myself debarred from it, by any ties that subsisted between myself and Mr. Calcraft; for these were now perfectly dissolved by his duplicity. Had I encouraged such a wish, I could soon have extricated myself from all my difficulties, as there was many a competitor for my favour; particularly one of the first and most generous men in the kingdom.

The packet not being ready to sail from Parkgate, lest I should forfeit the penalty of my articles, by not being at Dublin in time, I set off for Holyhead. As I travelled by myself, I had leisure to indulge my melancholy. I could not even help envying the happiness of my servants, in whose bosoms chearful innocence seemed to reign, whilst I was tortured with the severest reflections. These arose, not only from my unhappy situation, but from the perfidy and ingratitude I had experienced from a man, who, whilst he was pretending to regret my loss, was, as I had been informed, abetting and inventing the most improbable, and the falsest reports of me.

Among these, it was given out by them, that I encouraged the addresses of a noble Lord, with whose Countess I had the honour of being upon terms of intimacy. Had I been inclined to gallantry, for this reason, as well as upon account of his own deformity, that nobleman would have been the last man I should have chosen. They also carried their inveteracy so far, as to engage a person who wrote for bread, and is a disgrace to the navy, to scandalize me in a scurrilous publication, not unlike Bellmen's Verses.

In travelling to the Head, however dull and melancholy my days were, I had great entertainment in the evenings; there being always some person at the inns

playing upon the harp, the favourite instrument of the Welch. And the ditties they played seemed to suit the gloomy temperature of my mind. When I arrived at Conway Ferry, the wind was so high, that it was impracticable to go over. I was therefore obliged to remain at the ferry-house during the night.

Here I was necessitated to sup in the same room with all those who were forced, like myself, to take up their abode at the inn. There being but one room below stairs, and that, like the cobbler's, serving at once for "parlour, for kitchen, and hall," we all sat together; only the parlour was divided from the kitchen by a curtain. And both were tolerably well filled. For besides my suit, which consisted of the two postillions, a guide, two footmen, and three maids, the company was numerous. From the unfavourable appearance of the habitation, I was apprehensive that my entertainment would have been as homely. But I was not only most agreeably surprized with one of the best suppers I had ever sat down to at an inn, but with a small neat bed-room, and a very good bed, and every accommodation that could be hoped for in the best inns on the road. And all this at so trifling an expence, that it was not to be imagined people of the house could get a reasonable profit.

When I arrived at the Head, the packet was ready to sail. I found there a great number of people waiting to go over, but very few would venture, the sea being extremely boisterous. But as I neither wished for life, nor was apprehensive of danger, it was very immaterial to me in what state the sea was. I therefore went aboard, and, by way of preeminence, was cooped up in what is called the state-cabin. This situation was the means of my being more indisposed than I otherwise should have been. For during a storm, which lasted four days, I underwent the most excruciating sickness. And this was augmented, by having nothing to drink but cold water. As the passage is usually made in a few hours, I had not thought it necessary to lay in a sea-store.

We landed at Dunleary, when I was so much enfeebled by the fatigue I had undergone, that I was obliged to be supported to the shore. A coach was sent from Dublin



to convey me to the house of a lady on College Green, with whom I had been very intimate. As unpacking would take up more time than I chose to bestow upon it, I set off immediately, without staying to change even my linen. And from the situation I had been in for four days, together with the uneasy state of my mind, it must be supposed that my appearance was not the most brilliant.

My arrival having been hourly expected, curiosity had induced many of the students of the college to watch for my coming. I accordingly found the door of the house, at which I was to alight, crowded with them, in expectation of beholding a wonder. For it could not enter into the imagination of those young gentlemen, that any thing less than a *perfect beauty* had been so general a topic of conversation, and the subject of so many poetical compliments from their predecessors.

One of my female domestics was tolerably handsome; she, therefore, at first, caught their eyes, but as she had not that appearance of elegance which distinguished the gentlewoman, the mistake was but momentary. At length I stepped out of the coach. The long-expected phenomenon now made her appearance. But Oh, how different a figure from what their imagination had depicted! Fashion to yourself the idea of a little dirty creature, bent nearly double, enfeebled by fatigue, her countenance tinged with the jaundice, and in every respect the reverse of a person who could make the least pretensions to beauty. Such was I, when I presented myself to the sight of the gazing crowd. And so great and natural was their surprize and disappointment, that they immediately vanished, and left me to crawl into the house, without admiration or molestation.

I spent the evening at the Parliament House, where many of the seniors of the college, as well as the Provost, were present. Others likewise came to see the sight which had excited the disgust of the curious in the morning. Nothing is so favourable to an object as exaggerated dispraise. For, with only the assistance of abjection, and in the most simple dress, (simplicity in my dress being, as I have already observed, my constant adoption, except when finery was absolutely needful, and

I always scorned to owe any addition to art, which I disliked as much in the adornment of the person as of the mind. I made a more favourable impression upon the company than could have been expected.

The next morning Mr. Moslop came to congratulate me upon my safe arrival, as the violence of the storm had made him apprehensive for my safety. He informed me, that Mr. Woodward had been confined by a fever at Cork; notwithstanding which, as soon as he had heard of my engagement, he had sent the letter containing my promise of giving him the preference, to Mr. Barry, who had most illiberally posted it up in one of the principal coffee-houses in Dublin. It might not be unnecessary to add here, that when Mr. Calcraft was informed of this transaction, he sent to demand of Barry four hundred pounds he had lent him some years before. As it was not in Barry's power, Mr. Woodward was obliged to pay it for him. Thus was the latter punished for his indiscretion with regard to my letter.

I had sent my men servants and the horses back to London from Holyhead, as the inconvenience of bringing them to Dublin would have been great. Finding lodgings to be inconvenient, I took a ready-furnished house in Frederick-street. And as the theatre did not open for some time after my arrival, I had an opportunity of seeing many ladies, who favoured me with their recollection and intimacy. My old acquaintance, Mr. Crump, with whom I had always dealt for Irish linens, after my mother had declined that article, came to pay his respects to me. And as he was an universal merchant, I ordered of him wine, and what other things I wanted. He had entered into a connection in trade with a person, whose name was Hosea Coates. This man was of a rude, turbulent disposition, and greatly attached to Crow-street theatre, in which he had several shares; he consequently dreaded my success.

Upon the opening of the theatre, the ladies of Dublin divided themselves into different parties, making a point to support, with their utmost interest, the house they attached themselves to. Ladies Kildare, Branton, Leinster, Powerscourt, and the Honourable Miss Caulfield, with many

many other respectable personages, professed themselves the patronesses of Mossop and myself. And, indeed, I must attribute a great part of the success we met with, to their partiality; the company in Crow-street being infinitely stronger than ours. That consisted of Barry, Woodward, Abington, and Fitzhenry, besides some good seconds. Among these I include Mrs. Danger, who was by no means looked upon as capital then.

As for our troop it always put me in mind of Sir John Falstaff's ragged regiment, a part of which he had robbed the gibbets of. We were, however, joined, some short time after, by Mr. Brown, who had merit in comedy; and by Mr. Digges, who was a great favourite in Dublin, particularly among the ladies. As the latter will make a principal figure in the subsequent part of my history, it will be necessary to give a short description of him. He is blest with talents, is a fine figure, his face is handsome; and he has the art of persuading those with whom he converses, that he is the best of men. Through my intimacy in the Delawar family, I learned that he had been ill-treated by his uncle, and pitied him much; but as his character was universally known to be that of a man of gallantry, I declined admitting him as a visitor.

This was the state of our company, and likewise of the parties of the ladies, who carried their partiality to the most extravagant lengths. I appeared in Belvidera. But was by no means so well received in it as I had formerly been. This hurt me greatly, as I did not give myself time to consider, that I then had no competitor; and now I was left to stand alone against the united force of a company, which would have done credit to a London theatre. We, however, more than shared the public favour.

Mr. Mossop revived "The Orphan of China," which had succeeded at Drury-Lane the winter before. The dresses, in which he and myself were to perform, came from London. But how to manage, with regard to those of the rest of the characters, was a difficulty hardly to be got over. As the manager had quarrelled with Tracey, the tailor, credit was no more to be had than money. And if the piece could not be got up so as to an-



ticipate the other house, we had very little chance of rivalling them in it; all their decorations, clothes, &c. being expected from London, and having been already pulled away in all the papers, in the most ostentatious manner.

At length I prevailed upon Tracey, not only to make and expedite the dresses, but likewise to find the materials. We rehearsed three times a day, and after having taken the most indefatigable pains, got the piece ready for representation in less than a week. We accordingly were able to perform it before the proprietors of Crow-street, and got eight great audiences, ere the finery they so much boasted of arrived. This manœuvre proved a sore disappointment to the expectations of the gentry of the other house, who were thereby prevented from reimbursing their expences, which, I was informed, were very considerable.

Mr. Digges, who had marked me for a conquest, sighed at a distance, and covered his vanity with such awful respect, that I imagined the character I had heard of him was not a just one. He, at length, through the introduction of a female acquaintance of mine, got admittance to my house as a visitor. And as he was really the accomplished gentleman and an entertaining companion, it was impossible to resist being pleased with his company. For a while he affected to smother his passion. But in a short time after, being really ill, or pretending to be so, he wrote to me, and declared that love for me was the cause of it. Impelled by an irresistible fatality, I read his letters. And a circumstance soon after happened, which helped to forward the attainment of his wishes.

G. A. B.

#### LETTER LXXIV.

July 31, 17—

**M**Y bill, for wine and other articles, had of Mr. Crump, amounted to four hundred pounds, two of which I had paid; and intended settling the whole at my benefit, which I thought would be in good time. For though I received fifty guineas a week, yet through the

the extravagance of my servants, and my own thoughtlessness, I had not a guinea before hand. But to my great surprise I heard that Mr. Crump had failed, and that Coates had taken possession of his effects, books, &c.

Coriolanus was bespoke, and Mr. Mossop had the agreeable prospect of a subscription for six plays, which would enable him to pay the performers. For not one of them was regularly paid, but myself, though by what means he expended his money I could not imagine. As I went one day as usual to the rehearsal, I observed a mean looking fellow run by the side of my chair. I called, in my way, upon a lady. Still the same man was my attendant. Having no suspicion of any danger from him, I attributed it to the beauty of my sedan; which, indeed, attracted every eye.

I had some company at dinner, which made it rather later than usual when I set out for the theatre. As my chairmen entered Damask-street, the man who had followed me in the morning knocked at the front window of my chair, and, when I had let it down, showed me a bit of paper. Upon my enquiring what it was, he told me it was a writ for the two hundred pounds I owed Coates as successor to Crump's affairs, and insisted that I should go with him. I told him he should have the money, if he would go to the theatre, and that I would likewise make him a handsome present for the permission. But this he would not consent to do; as, he said, he had particular orders from the plaintiff to the contrary.

This being the case, I made a virtue of necessity, and went with him to a house in Skinner-row. When I got there, I sent for Coates, but he was not to be found. The officer now candidly told me, that the intention of taking me in the evening was, to prevent my appearing at the theatre that night. He had been particularly warned, he said, not to arrest me in the morning, as they were well assured I should have paid the debt, and by that means have disappointed their purpose. It was two o'clock in the morning before the plaintiff could be met with, and as he had given orders that the affair should only be settled by himself, I was obliged to wait with patience his coming.

And thus ended a week's delay.

coming. *Mrs. Molloy* and *Miss Ly'll* visited me in my distance, and, I believe, the officer's house was never so graced before.

*Mrs. Usher* had been obliged to read my part. As soon as the play was over, *Mr. Mossop* came to me. And I was vastly apprehensive that he would have eaned *Coates*. This was what the man seemed to wish, for such a vulgar impertinent I never heard before. He had the impudence to tell us, that he knew he should easily have got the money, but he wished to prevent my playing that night. "Every thing," continued he, "is fair, where interests clash."

When *Mr. Digges* found me in this situation, he was like a distracted man. His first business was to give a most severe chastisement to *Coates*; which, together with some other embarrassments in his private affairs, obliged him to leave Dublin. Before he went, he wrote to me, earnestly requesting to speak with me. I consented. When his attractions, his sufferings, gratitude, pity, and a predilection in his favour, all joined to induce me to enter into a serious connection with him. This, though not binding by the laws of the country to a person of my religious persuasion, was notwithstanding valid to all intents and purposes. And the connection, in consequence, made us mutually unhappy, during the two years we lived together.

I was, I think, to be unhappy in every union I formed. Whether this arose from the contrarieties naturally attendant on love, so truly described by *Shakspeare* in the following beautiful lines, or from some other cause, I will not pretend to say.

—For aught that ever I could read,  
Could ever hear by tale or history,  
The course of true love never did run smooth;  
But either it was different in blood;  
Or else misgranted in respect of years;  
Or else it stood upon the choice of friends;  
Or if there were a sympathy in choice,  
War, death, or sickness, did lay siege to it;  
Making it momentary, as a sound;

I should I had never known it.

Swift



Swift as a shadow, short as any dream;

Brief as the lightning in the collied night.

I received, about this time, a letter from Mr. Alderman Cracroft, my attorney in London, informing me, that Mr. Davy's attorney had orders to sue me for the arrears due upon my annuity; unless I sent him a power of attorney to enable him to make a lawful claim upon Mr. Calcraft, who had refused to pay it. As I had made no doubt but that it had been regularly paid, I was doubly angry at his meanness in having in his letter pretended ignorance of the affair. I therefore immediately signed the writing that was sent me, and forwarded it to London by the first post. I afterwards heard, that upon Mr. Calcraft's treating the person who made the demand, very cavalierly, he was arrested. Hurt at such an indignity offered to a man of his great consequence, he threw the cause into chancery, where it remained hung up, during Mr. Davy's life, who was too opulent and too indolent to carry on the suit.

I remained in Dublin till the middle of the summer. And Mr. Mossop not being able to pay me the whole of what he had engaged for, I was obliged to borrow four hundred pounds, before I could leave the kingdom. After I landed in England, I was taken so ill at Chester, that I was confined for several days. I had the happiness to come over with two ladies, who were very attentive to me, and who were kind enough to delay their journey, in order that we might travel to town together.

When I was tolerably recovered, these ladies persuaded me to go with them to the concert. There I met Mr. Crump. As I had not seen him, or heard any thing from him, since my being arrested for the debt due to him, it was natural for me to suppose that he not only knew of the affair, but was consenting to it. I accordingly, when he saluted me with his usual cordiality, could not help expressing my surprise at it. An explanation took place, immediately after which, he abruptly left the room, and, as I have since heard, set off for Dublin, where he endeavoured

D. 5

voured to revenge himself upon Coates. But he was disappointed in this, for Coates having received some intimation of his design, and dreading his resolution, to avoid his fury, set off for England. And in a short time after, this much injured man, who had before given some proofs of insanity, died raving mad.

Upon my arrival in London, my health not being perfectly restored, I went to my former lodgings at Chelsea, from thence I wrote to Mr. Cracroft, informing him that I would be with him in a few days. I was indebted to this gentleman a very considerable sum; and he had expressed some displeasure in a letter he wrote me, upon account of my leaving the kingdom, without acquainting him with my design. I own I was unpardonable in not doing it; and the more so, as I was very intimate with his lady and family.

When I waited on the Alderman, he asked me whether I had any engagement at the theatre. To which I answered in the negative; adding, that I could not attempt to make one, till my affairs were settled. He said, it would be very difficult to do that, as the amount of what I owed was more than he believed I thought it. I had made no doubt but that Mr. Calcraft had appropriated the overplus arising from the sale of my jewels to the payment of my debts, as far as it would go, and I concluded that might amount to near four thousand pounds. The workmanship of some of them was so extremely curious, that it must have insured the sale of them, and that at a very good price. There was among them a windmill, which, upon being wound up, went for three hours; and a cap set in a style peculiarly elegant.

How great then was my astonishment, when I was informed by the Alderman, that they had been delivered to Mr. Jafferis, a sword cutler in the Strand, who had broke them to pieces by order of Mr. Calcraft, and that the money arising from them only amounted to eleven hundred pounds. As I had delivered Mr. Calcraft the receipts, which were for more than six thousand pounds, and they had been purchased of people of reputation in that business, I could not account for the manœuvre. I therefore

therefore desired him to write to Mr. Calcraft upon the subject.

Mr. Calcraft now proceeded to inform me, that he had received a list of my debts from Clifford, (who had left me upon account of her being married,) and that they amounted to ten thousand, three hundred pounds. My courage now forsook me: I had little to hope from Mr. Calcraft, who, in this last instance, had not only shown himself to be cruel, but *dishonest*, in the strictest sense of the word. The Alderman then seemed to hint, at my taking the benefit of an act of insolvency, which was at that time in agitation. I own I never felt myself degraded till that moment. The bare supposition of such a step made me so ill, that I was unable for some minutes to answer him.

When I was a little recovered, I informed him that I was incapable of such a thought. In me, I said, it would be the blackest fraud: as mine were debts which had been contracted from extravagant thoughtlessness, and not like those of the fair trader, which were generally the consequences of losses or misfortunes. I added, that I was determined to throw myself upon the mercy of my creditors, to whom, if they would allow me time, I would make all the reparation in my power, by giving up to them the whole of my salary, reserving only my benefit for my own support.

This resolution the alderman applauded in the warmest terms. He said, that he had hinted at the measure, merely to make a trial of my probity. And since I had so nobly scorned to clear myself by such an unjust method, he would draw up for me a letter of licence, which he had no doubt but every creditor, as well as himself, would sign; and not only do that, but afford me support to the utmost of their power. He accordingly fulfilled his promise, and advanced me some money for my present exigencies.

Mr. Rich. received me with open arms; and my engagement being signed, I was so far easy. My letter of licence was likewise signed in a few days by all my creditors but *one*; who declared she would never proceed to any violent measure for the recovery of the debt, but having



having made a solemn promise never to sign any paper whatever, she could not set her hand to mine.

Mr. Digges I found was gone into Wales to wait for my return; it being inconvenient for him to cross the water, he could not go to Ireland to accompany me the whole way. Whilst he was waiting near the head, (for, from my returning by way of Chester he had missed me,) he was informed that a nobleman had passed through the town, on his way to London, with an actress; being told that the lady was a little black woman, and that she went on seemingly against her consent, Mr. Digges instantly concluded it must be me. He accordingly like a true Don Quixote, set off after them, in order to rescue his dulcinea from the hands of her ravisher. He could not overtake them till he got to Holywell, where he was informed they were in bed. His fears however were a little alleviated, by hearing that they slept in separate apartments. He waited with the utmost impatience till they awoke; when he discovered that the person who had caused this alarm, was no other than Lord Ferrers, who had been to Ireland, to prevent his fugitive sister from going on the stage, and was now returning with her to London. As the description Mr. Digges had received of the lady answered in every particular to mine, the mistake was natural; and happy to find it was not the person he expected, he made directly for town.

Paying a visit one evening to Lady St. Leger, I observed a lady with a pair of my bracelets upon her arms; I could not be deceived, as they had on them the letters G. A. B. in diamonds, and with the same letters likewise in blue enamel, and were set round with brilliants. Maisoneuff had charged me two hundred and forty pounds for them. Having been informed by Mr. Cracroft that all my jewels had been taken to pieces, I could not help observing to the lady, that she did me too much honour in wearing my cypher. Upon which it came out, that Mr. Calcraft had made her a present of them. I further learnt, that my good friend before-mentioned, had received as a present from that gentleman, my best diamond ear-rings, which cost me five hundred and seventy pounds of the same jeweller; together with many other valuable  
ones;

ones; among which was my *pink* diamond ring, a gem of so rare a kind as not to be matched.

Their being sent to a silversmith's to be unset, was now easily accounted for. It is very well known, that pawn-brokers never lend near half their value on diamonds; the fashion of them changing so often. Consequently Bibby would not have advanced me two thousand pounds upon what sold for eleven hundred. As soon as I had made this discovery, I ordered a suit to be commenced against Mr. Calcraft for the whole value, which was settled amicably the March following. But that did not annihilate the intended injury.

Can any reflections which may drop from my pen, in the course of these Memoirs, upon the conduct of a man capable of such an act of *dishonesty*, even at the time he was pretending to have the greatest regard for me, be thought to favour too much of asperity? I am too well convinced of your candour, to suppose you will think they do. Nor will the world, I dare say, after they are hereby informed of the truth, which has never till now reached them. The detestation I entertained for him, after such repeated proofs of duplicity, was well founded. And I must surely stand acquitted in the eyes of every impartial person, for not renewing a connection with one, whose heart was fashioned of such stuff, as I have in the preceding pages described it, with the strictest justice, to be.

G. A. B.

## LETTER LXXV.

August 6, 1777.

WHEN the season began, I took a house in Jermyn-street; and by a most fortunate *political* event, I was enabled to live in a degree of elegance little inferior to what I had been accustomed to. Mr. Digges had embarrassed himself, both in England and Scotland, for a woman he had formerly been connected with. This, with our living separately, doubled my expenses. And the latter subjected me to solicitations, to which every

every woman who has been supposed to make one in the gay world is liable. A great part of this, I indiscreetly drew upon myself, by not making known to the world the reasons of Calcraft's treacherous conduct. Had I done so, the liberal part of mankind would have pitied me.

Among the competitors for my favour, which were numerous, there was one who actually offered me ten thousand pounds to be admitted as a favoured lover. As the gentleman is now happily married, I will not mention his name; there are, however, I believe, living vouchers of the truth of this assertion. And here I can safely aver, that, notwithstanding ill nature or envy might have suggested insinuations to the contrary, I never, even in thought, deviated from the duty I owed, as I imagined, to Mr. Digges, whilst the union between us existed.

Whilst my house in Jernyn-street was fitting up, I continued to sleep at Chelsea, but was in town all day. The drawing-room and best bed-chamber being not yet finished, the upholsterer's man secreted nine yards of damask, a quantity of Chintz, and some very fine Dresden china, which were presents. As his honesty had been more than once suspected by his employer, a search warrant was obtained to examine his lodgings. This being carried into execution, the whole of my property, which was very remarkable, was found, but nothing belonging to his master.

The upholsterer was one of the most implacable of men. He came to Chelsea in the evening, whilst I was absent, and by means of threats, so far intimidated my maid, as to prevail upon her to go to the justice's, and swear to the goods which were found. This she did, and was bound over to prosecute in the penalty of forty pounds. But the offender having a very large family, I was so far influenced in his favour by my natural humanity, as to keep my maid from appearing against him. I then set on foot a subscription towards paying the forfeiture of the bond, and I believe I got thirty guineas towards it.

In consequence of my maid's not appearing, the man was discharged, and the very same night he called at my



my house. As I supposed he had no other business with me than to return me thanks for my lenity, and acknowledgements of that nature being most disagreeable to me, I told the servant who brought in his name, that I was busy, and could not see him. Upon which the fellow sent in word, that he *must* see me, or it would be worse for me; for I had compounded felony, and before a few hours were passed, I might be called to answer for it.

I was alarmed at the insult, but not being conversant with the law, I was at a loss to comprehend his meaning. It was therefore necessary to refer to some one for advice. And as I could think of no person, at the time, to consult, but my cousin Crawford, who had taken the benefit of the late insolvent act, and was returned to his chambers and business, I sent for him to settle the affair; and, in the mean while, the ungrateful wretch waited at a neighbouring public house. When Mr. Crawford came, the fellow made a peremptory demand of fifty pound, which he insisted on being paid immediately, otherwise he would go and lodge an information against me. Finding from my good cousin that there was no redress, I paid the money.

Thus did I become a victim to my humanity, by means of a monster, who deserved to suffer the severest inflictions of the law for his ingratitude, though he had escaped the due deserts of his dishonesty.---This instance serves to prove, that however strongly humanity might urge to the contrary, the regular prosecution of an offender against the laws of his country, is a duty we owe to ourselves as well as to the community.---In such cases, lenity ceases to be a virtue.---A stronger claim than delicacy of feeling calls for a spirited exertion upon these occasions.---The trouble and inconveniencies which attend a prosecution, ought to be cheerfully submitted to; and though services rendered our country of this kind, are not attended with so much eclat as those where life is exposed in her defence; yet they are a duty incumbent on every good citizen, and as deserving of a civic crown.---Justice, indeed, should ever be tempered by moderation, and humanity should always be exerted, whenever prudence does not forbid.

The

The theatre not opening so soon as was expected, I had leisure to visit, and be visited by, what the world generally denominate friends; that is, those who will entertain you as long as you are amusing, and are the fashion; but the moment stern adversity throws her contemptuous robe over you, they no longer are your friends. Like the poor sequestered stag, so pathetically described by Shakspeare, "These velvet friends abandon you. The careless herd, full of the pasture, jump along by you, and never stay to greet a poor and broken bankrupt." On the contrary, they join in the cry against you, and accuse you of faults you never committed, in order to excuse themselves from assisting you.

It has often excited my wonder, when I have reflected, how much the word *friendship* is abused, and how it is prostituted in its application, by those who are unacquainted with its meaning. Since adversity has visited me, I have frequently found those whom I have always thought to be endowed with the most refined and liberal sentiments, to be as ready to avoid the person they once affected to admire, and loaded with professions of regard, as the servile herd: and I can with truth affirm, that among the numbers I formerly had it in my power to oblige, I never met with a grateful return but from one gentleman, of whose gratitude I shall give you an account in my future letters. Was I to mention to you some very extraordinary instances which I have it in my power to do, some of my former *nominal* friends would not be very well pleased at the disclosure. But they may sleep in quiet. My injuries, however irritating, shall not impel me to disturb their peace, if peace can ever find a place in an ungrateful mind.

Yet why should I expect to be exempted from the natural consequences of imprudence and distress?—Neglect and censure constantly attend the depressive turn of Fortune's wheel.—It ever was, and ever will be so.—How just and exemplary is the proof my beloved and often-

As you like it, Act I. Scene I.

quoted

quoted author gives us of this human depravity, in his  
 "Timon of Athens" p.

"As we do turn our backs  
 "From our companion thrown into the grave,  
 "So his familiars from his buried fortunes  
 "Slunk all away; leaving their false vows with  
 "him,  
 "Like empty purses pick'd. Whilst his poor  
 "Self,  
 "A dedicated beggar to the air,  
 "With his disease of all-shunn'd poverty,  
 "Walk'd, like Contempt, alone."

As I am upon this topic, let me add, that the many favours for which I am indebted to those, whose humanity has induced them to afford me relief since distress has come upon me, are deeply imprinted on my memory; and the impression, I trust, will never be eradicated. Whilst I am condemning ingratitude in others, I would not wish to be guilty of it myself. I would therefore here return my most grateful acknowledgements for the numerous favours I have received, not only from many noble personages, whose virtues add lustre to their high rank, but likewise to the community to which I formerly belonged. To them I shall always esteem myself greatly indebted, and assure them it will be the highest happiness I can experience, if ever I have an opportunity to evince my gratitude.

But to return.—Mr. Rich produced, this season, a most superb Representation of a Coronation, in the historical plays of Shakespeare. And in order to prevent the principal performers from refusing to appear in the procession, he proposed walking in it *himself*, as Queen's Chamberlain. Unfortunately, however, he was taken ill at the last rehearsal, and never had the pleasure of seeing the grand pageant he had spared no expence to render as magnificent as possible. As I performed in most of the plays, and walked as Queen every night, I had



very little leisure to pay any attention to my domestic affairs. I left the conduct of my house entirely to my own maid, having no doubt of her honesty; and supposing the weekly vouchers she brought me in, a sufficient check upon her.

In the month of February, the creditor, who would not sign my letter of licence, called upon me, and requested that I would give her a bond and judgment for the money I owed her. She alledged, in support of her request, that it was a large sum; and in case of my death, my furniture, plate, &c. would secure it to her. As I fully intended to discharge it as soon as possible, I consented to her request, upon condition that the security might be given for no shorter a term than a year. Accordingly called, soon after, at the person's house, and having read the *bond*, which was stipulated for the time mentioned, I signed it; but, being in haste, I very imprudently omitted seeing whether the judgment was of the same date.

In a short time after, I received a letter from the woman, informing me, that she must have immediate payment of the whole money, or else she would put the judgment in force against me. Alarmed at such a dreadful threat, I knew not what course to take. Mr. Digges, being much embarrassed in his affairs, had accepted of an invitation to return to Edinburgh, where he was a great favourite; and there he intended to continue, till I could get my affairs settled, which his presence greatly impeded, as those persons, who were willing to assist me, did not care to do it while he was with me.

As I had not entertained any apprehensions, from this creditor, I had paid many others, whom Mr. Cracroft had pointed out as being in indifferent circumstances. But this woman being opulent, and always professing the greatest friendship and regard for me, I did not suppose she would proceed to violent measures. I however, now discovered, that I had put myself in the power of one of the *worst* of women: a woman, who thought nothing wrong that would produce money. I had heard, indeed, that her character was doubtful; but, as she had never given me the least hint which could authorize suspicion, I imagined

gined the report sprang from ill-nature. I had, notwithstanding, reason to alter my opinion. As she was not only a lace-woman, but delt in every article necessary for a lady's toilet, it was not doing her any injustice to suppose ladies of easy virtue frequented her house; but, upon an explanation of her sentiments, I saw I had every thing to dread. It is not improper here to remark, as it was the means of my gaining a suit, which she afterwards instituted against me for the recovery of the money, that, in a letter she sent me, she informed me that the bond was for a year, but the judgment for a month. And her brother, to make the letter more forcible, swore by his Maker, that they *had hit me*. Through this expression, and the palpable deception which had been made use of upon the occasion, I was enabled to triumph over such a dangerous opponent.

G. A. B.

## LETTER LXXVI.

Aug. 14, 17—

**M**R. Calcraft being one evening at the representation of "Zara," the uncommon applause I met with revived his passion, and induced him to make use of every method he could devise to bring about a reconciliation. Having watched me one Sunday, he came up to me in Derby-court, and earnestly intreated that I would favour him with half an hour's conversation. Upon my refusal, he begged that if I would not be reconciled to him, I would attend to a proposal he had to make to me, which would accommodate the disagreeable affair relative to the diamonds. This also I refused to do, assuring him, at the same time, that I would not hold any correspondence with him whatever.

Upon this he went to a tavern, the corner of York-street, and I really believe I received twenty letters from him in a short time. Finding me still inflexible, he sent Nurse Carter to me; the person I have mentioned before, who lived with me many years, and brought up all my children. This good woman, he knew, had great influence over me, and therefore he was in hopes she would

would remove my prepossessions. But they were too deeply rooted; particularly as he had offered me a fresh insult, by getting a friend to deliver me a message, of an extraordinary nature, just after my return from Ireland. This aggravation of his injuries, will be fully explained in the letter already hinted at, which I shall give you, by way of Appendix to my "Apology;" as I was then obliged to suppress the publication of it, for reasons assigned in their proper place.

Nurse Carter executed her commission with great fidelity to her employer. And at last, wearied out with her importunities, I told her, that if Mr. Calcraft would write me his proposals of accommodation, or send his attorney to me, I would hear what they were, and consult Mr. Cracroft upon the propriety of accepting them. He accordingly sent them by one of his clerks. They contained the following articles: That he would give me money to pay off Mr. Sparks's bond for four hundred pounds. That he would compromise all my debts with my creditors, if I would consent to go abroad till it was done, as none of them would accept of less than the whole of their demand whilst I was upon the spot. And lastly, he would grant me an additional annuity of one hundred pounds; which, with the twenty pounds surplus of the former, he said, would enable me to live in Holland or France till the affair was finished.

Having consulted Mr. Cracroft upon the subject, I wrote to Mr. Stubbs, senior, who still lives in Parliament-street, informing him that I would accept of his client's proposals. That gentleman, accordingly, waited upon me with the bond of annuity for the additional hundred a year, which was in trust to Nicholas Linwood, Esq; of Broad-street, wine-merchant, a partner with Clermont and Co. Mr. Stubbs, at the same time, brought with him a general release for me to sign; but this, as an honest man, he advised me not to do. As I could not, however, have any legal demand upon Mr. Calcraft, the suit with Mr. Davy relative to the former annuity being still pending, I delivered up the marriage contract given upon our union, and signed the release. Having disposed of the hundred a year out of the former annuity to all



all *intents and purposes*, till the sum which I had received should be repaid, with fifty pounds besides, as I have already observed, it is not to be supposed that by signing the release I gave a receipt for what was not mine to dispose of. The release is now in the hands of Mr. Stubbs, junior, of Suffolk-street, Charing-cross.

The same evening the deeds were signed; I set off for Harwich, in my way to Holland. I have omitted to inform you, that upon the conversation I had held with my rigorous female creditor, from which I obtained a knowledge of her purposes, I indiscreetly left my house, and went to my mother's in Brewer-street; having first sent my plate to Alderman Cracroft's, as a security for his debt. The companion of my journey was Miss Betty Cibber, who had been left me as a legacy by her grandfather, Colley Cibber. As her intellects were rather weak, and she was liable to fall a prey to every designing person who flattered her, that celebrated old gentleman consigned her to my care; and he left all his grandchildren as legacies to different persons. A son of Mrs. Smith, whom I have formerly mentioned, being a surgeon, I had got him to officiate to a regiment. This young man, likewise, accompanied my flight.

When we got to Harwich, the wind being contrary, we were prevented from sailing; and as I was apprehensive of being pursued by my inflexible creditor, I thought it prudent to go to Manningtree, a village at some distance from Harwich, to remain there till the wind changed. My benefit was to be on the Monday following, which would render it impossible to keep my departure any longer a secret.

The Thursday evening, as we were at supper, we heard a chaise and four enter the inn, and presently to my infinite surprize, Mr. Digges made his appearance. This, you may be assured, was not the most agreeable *rencontre*. He appeared to be greatly enraged, and insisted on my two companions returning to London, and on my immediately getting into another chaise, and quitting the house. I was so terrified by the violence of his temper, that I consented to his injunctions, on condition that he did not carry me to Edinburgh. I had some how

or other taken an unaccountable aversion to that place, but without being able to assign any reason for it.

We travelled, side by side, not in the best temper with each other, without pursuing any fixed route; and when we arrived at Cambridge, I had fresh cause of distress. Some rhyming Cantab had defaced the windows of the inn, where we put up, with some lines in my favour. This added fuel to the flame which was already blazing in his bozom. And, as "Trifles light as air, are to the jealous, confirmations strong, as proofs of holy writ," he thought he had found fresh reason to accuse me of levity.

But his attention was in some measure taken off from these disquieted thoughts by an unexpected incident. Taking up a news-paper which lay in the room, I observed in it an advertisement, which was too particularly pointed, for me to doubt that it related to myself. It ran thus: "If the lady, who left a near relation's on such a day, with a young gentlewoman and gentleman, will return; that relation has in possession a larger deposit than will serve to accommodate the disagreeable affair, which occasioned her to leave London."

Upon reading this intelligence, I insisted on immediately returning back to London. To which Mr. Digges consented. But when we got to Edmonton, he determined to leave me there, and go to the capital by himself, to enquire into the circumstances of the affair. He accordingly set out, whilst I pleased myself with the hopes of being there as soon as him. But, upon my ordering a postchaise, the man of the house informed me, that he had received positive directions from the gentleman not to let me have a carriage, nor even suffer me to leave the house. Patience was my only resource; though, I own, I cannot constitutionally make that virtue my boast.

When my good man returned, he informed me, that my mother was so enraged at my not coming back before, supposing I must have seen the advertisement, that she had determined to refund the money deposited in her

hands; and to sell the furniture of my house, in order to pay Mrs. Jordan, my milliner, who was her intimate friend. I entreated Mr. Digges to suffer me to go to my mother, that I might try to prevail upon her to alter her resolution. But my entreaties were ineffectual. Notwithstanding the vexation I felt at the time, from this obstinate refusal, I must do him the justice to say, that I believe he was influenced by no other motive than pure regard. He had engaged to go back to Scotland. He had likewise great reason to suppose, that, from his being so much involved, he should not be able to continue in London, should he break that engagement. Besides, it was natural for him to conclude, that the deposit was *conditionally* lodged with my mother, the nature of our attachment being unknown. All these reasons induced him to insist on my staying with him.

We then once more set out, without having any fixed place to go to. When we got to Barton Mills, an inn on the Norwich road, I was taken very ill. Here he left me, and went again to London; I believe, to enquire whether my mother had carried her threats into execution; and he found she had done it immediately. I was now left in a very disagreeable situation; and, for the first time in my life, was apprehensive of knowing the want of money for my present exigencies. All my wardrobe had been put on board the packet at Harwich, so that I had no apparel with me but a few shifts, my night-dress, and the travelling habit I had on. To pay my expences when I got to Holland, I had procured bills and letters of credit from Mr. Colley, an acquaintance of my mother's, upon merchants at Antwerp and the Hague, at which places I intended taking up my residence alternately. But these were now of no service to me.

In this situation, we turned our horses heads towards the North; and when we came to Preston, in Lancashire, the money I had with me was nearly expended. Nothing was now to be done, but for Mr. Digges to go on to Edinburgh. This he did, leaving me at a village, the name of which I have forgot, about twenty miles short of it; as I had insisted on his not taking me to that place, agreeable to the promise he had made me.

In



In two days after he left me, a post chaise came to convey me on to the Grass Market, as the driver told me. This I supposed to be a town which was called by that name, and accordingly went with him. When I arrived at an inn in the Cannon Gate, a woman waited for me, of a most extraordinary figure. She was very lusty; had been handsome, was intolerably dirty; had on a Dutch cap, with a plaid round her shoulders; and was without stays. She informed me, in the Scotch accent, that her name was Molly Kerthaw, a particular friend of my spouse's, and that she came to conduct me to my apartments. I told her, I hoped they were not in Edinburgh. She declared, they were not, but at Miss Coulstone's, a person who was genteel as well as myself, though she took in plain work. She acquainted me, that she had ordered dinner at the inn where we were, particularly a very fine *turbot*, which she dwelt much upon. I had but little appetite at any time; and indisposition, fatigue, and fretting, had not increased it. But, to my great surprize, when the boasted dinner appeared, the very fine *turbot* proved to be a large piece of coarse thornback.

Between six and seven o'clock in the evening, a coach came to convey me to my apartments. When we arrived, after having mounted three pair of stairs, the ground-floor of which was a chandler's shop, I was introduced to the *gentle* Miss Coulstone. This lady appeared to be an old maid of about sixty years of age, and looked as if she had been smoke-dried. She was the very counterpart of the old woman in "Rule a Wife and have a Wife."

The sound of music now reached my ears. Upon my enquiring from whence it came, I was answered, from the theatre, which was directly opposite. From this I learnt, that the Cannon Gate, where the chaise had set me down, was the suburbs to the city of Edinburgh, into which I had thus, through my ignorance of the country, been decoyed. I no sooner made the discovery than I took a pair of scissors, and cut my hair off, quite close to my head, to prevent my being solicited to appear in public.

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The piece which was performing was the "Beggar's Opera," in which my gentleman acted Macheath, a part he was esteemed very capital in. After the opera, he hastened to me, when he informed me, that the English papers having announced my absence, it was conjectured, that the new comer at Miss Coulstone's was the very fugitive that had lately deserted her situation at Covent Garden.

The next day, Mr. Batts, joint proprietor of the Edinburgh theatre, with Mr. Dawson, and acting manager, acquainted Mr. Digges, that it would be useless to open the doors, unless he could induce me to appear upon their stage. I could not possibly conceive how my arrival could be so soon discovered. For, to prevent all suspicion, it was not to be known that Mr. Digges had attended me down, and he was to reside at his own lodgings.

Our journey had been expensive. I had but little money left, and Mr. Digges less; for the bills I had upon Holland, were of no use to me here. In this situation, there was no other alternative but my conforming to Mr. Batts's wishes. The loss of my hair was the greatest bar to my appearance. However, for the first time, I had recourse to false; and, as I had not even necessaries, I was obliged to have clothes made at a great expence. But my success was so much beyond expectation, that I was very well enabled to do this. Curiosity induced families to come from all parts of the country.

The season being so far advanced, eight nights were to be the limited number of my performing, and the last was to be for my benefit. The morning of that day I was arrested by the creditor, who had been the occasion of my indiscreet flight from London. I was, however, soon set at liberty, the caption being against the laws of Scotland, which allow some days notice to debtors before they can be taken.

Upon this occasion, the first lawyers in the Kingdom were volunteers in my cause; particularly Mr. Montgomery, afterwards Chief Baron, and the Dean of the Faculty. It at length came to trial; and the letter I formerly mentioned, was produced, from which it plainly appeared, that the security was fraudulently obtained.

And the courts of *justice* in Scotland, being at the same time courts of *equity*, a verdict was given in my favour. Having thus defeated the iniquitous designs of my creditor, she consented to receive her debt by instalments of two hundred pounds a year. After this my other creditors, particularly Mr. Alderman Cragcroft and Doctor Baillie, to whom I was indebted in considerable sums, joined in recommending me to that personal protection, which they knew was to be had in Scotland.

As good frequently springs from evil, this misfortune seemed to be the means of procuring me the attention and civility I met with in so eminent a degree, during my residence in this kingdom. In particular, it procured me the happiness of being admitted into the family of Mr. Montgomery, upon the most intimate footing, of which I shall always have the most grateful sense. The most attached patronesses I had, besides those of the Montgomery family, which were numerous, were the Duchess of Douglass, and the Miss Edphinstones. The latter were partial to me to a degree of enthusiasm. Lord Ruthven likewise honoured me with his support.

The ensuing season I was to have a third of the profits, with two benefits, and Mr. Digges a weekly salary. As Mr. Calcraft seemed to think that Scotland was abroad, he regularly paid my late granted annuity to Mr. Speediman, proprietor of the stomachic pills in the Strand. Mr. Digges now took a house at Bonnington, a very pleasant village, near Edinburgh. Our success at the theatre was very great, and we could have saved money, had not the debts my gentleman had contracted upon account of the person he formerly lived with, embarrassed him greatly.

About this time I was much surprized to receive a letter from Mr. Ballard, treasurer of Covent Garden theatre, containing a demand for a capital sum. He informed me, that Mr. Rich's executors had made him account for the salary, paid me three years before, during the shutting of the house, upon account of the demise of one of the female branches of the Royal Family. My agreement was annual, and Mr. Rich had expressly ordered the treasurer not to make any deduction for that vacation.



vacation. But as Mr. Ballard had not taken the order in writing, he was liable to pay it. As I had received the money, I could by no means consent that he should refund it. Common honesty required, in my idea, that he should not be the sufferer. I therefore wrote to Alderman Crocrot, desiring he would settle it, as well as he could, to the satisfaction of the treasurer.

At this period my mother, together with all my paraphernalia, which was returned from Holland, sent down to me a young gentlewoman, that, she imagined, would make some figure upon the stage. Her name was Wordley. She had an uncommon flow of spirits, and had received a more liberal education than is usually bestowed on English women in the middle line of life. Her father was steward to the Earl of Powys, and he had spared no pains to cultivate the mind of his daughter, who was his favourite, and whose genius led her to receive his instructions with pleasure. So accomplished a young woman was to be considered as a valuable acquisition, as well as doing honour to my mother's recommendation. I therefore requested her to take up her residence at Donnington.

## LETTER LXXVII.

August 27, 17—

**U**PON looking forward to the number of incidents it will be needful yet to relate, to give you a perfect view of this chequered life of mine, and to let the world into the sources of those actions which in many instances have drawn upon me *unmerited* censure; I see they will much exceed the bounds I imagined, when I first sat down to record them.—Circumstance grows from circumstance—and recollection receives additional vigour from the exercise of it—I therefore cannot help being apprehensive, that notwithstanding the assurances you have so often given me to the contrary, the relation of them will prove tedious to you.—This apprehension, however, will be a curb to me, and prevent me from inserting any incidents that are not immediately conducive

to the purposes for which I entered upon it; namely, to satisfy your curiosity, and to endeavour to remove those prejudices the public have imbibed against me, *from not knowing the whole of my story.* And I shall of course make my digressions as short and unfrequent as possible.

Mr. Digges did every thing in his power to make me happy. He indulged me with every pleasure he could procure for me. But my temper was so much soured by the continual demands for the debts he had contracted before my union with him, that I could not relish any enjoyment, or behave towards him with that complacency I could have wished.

About the middle of the season he informed me, that he had received a letter, acquainting him that his brother, Captain Dudley Digges, was arrived in England, and that he wished much to see him, upon some family concerns. He therefore determined to set off to visit his brother, and we were obliged to manage in the theatre as well as we could. But how to procure money for the expences of his journey was the question. This Mr. Still, my attorney, and indeed my factorum, upon my application to him, advanced.

When Mr. Digges arrived in London, my mother was soon reconciled to him, and he remained at her house during his stay. Upon his return, he presented me with a large silver repeater, to be placed at the head of my bed, as I had often wished for a machine of that kind, to know the hours when I was to take the medicines my indifferent state of health rendered necessary.

There was a young gentlewoman in the company, for whom I had a great attachment, the wife of Mr. Aickin, of Drury-lane theatre. But death soon robbed me of her. This event affected me much, and made my health, which was but indifferent before, still more so. It therefore became needful to find out some performer, who could relieve me from the constant fatigue I underwent. And I met with Mrs. Kennedy, with whom I had formerly played during my first excursion to Dublin.

This lady, her husband, and their son, were accordingly engaged at a salary, which Edinburgh would  
by

by no means afford. But what was to be done! my playing constantly was impracticable; and no person could supply my place, unless they had acquired some reputation. The proprietors were therefore obliged to consent to the engagement, notwithstanding the expence was so great. Mrs. Kennedy had merit in some parts, and as she had been in several travelling companies, she was studied in every character. Though she was far from handsome, she was a good figure.

Our views, however, in engaging her, were frustrated by indisposition. She was taken ill soon after her arrival; and a dreadful eruption appearing in her face, she was able to perform but four times during the whole season. A ridiculous circumstance happened in consequence, which, if it strikes you, as it did me and the whole audience, at the time, it will at least excite a smile.

Mrs. Kennedy thinking herself so well recovered, as to be able to perform, she sent word that she was able to appear in Zara, in the "Mourning Bride," which was to be acted for the benefit of some particular person, she wished to befriend. But about four o'clock on the day of performance, she was taken so very ill, that her appearance was impracticable. The piece was to be played by particular desire, and there was no substitute to be got for so capital a part, nor a possibility of changing it. In this dilemma, Mrs. Farrel, Mrs. Kennedy's sister, who was about twenty years older than that lady, and was a person who used to figure away in old nurses, undertook to play the part.

The audience expressed marks of disapprobation throughout the whole of her playing, but particularly so when she died. Upon which she rose from between the mutes, and advancing towards the front of the stage, she told the audience, that she was concerned she could not acquit herself so as to give satisfaction; but as good nature had induced her to undertake the part, merely to serve the person whose benefit it was, she hoped they would excuse it. Having finished her speech, she hastened to the place from whence she had risen, and threw herself down again between the mutes, who covered her face with the veil. So uncommon an incident had such



an effect upon the risible muscles of the whole audience, as well as myself, who was just entering as Almeria; that it was impossible to compose them for the rest of the evening.

This puts me in mind of a similar laughable adventure that once befel Mrs. Hamilton. That lady, playing the character of Arpasia in *Tamerlane*, and being very lusty, the scencemen found great difficulty to lift the chair into which she had thrown herself, upon her supposed death. Which she observing, she ordered them to set it down, and making her courtesy to the audience, walked off as coolly as if she was not to be supposed dead.

The letters I received, during the time I presided at the Edinburgh theatre, from itinerant players applying to be engaged, amounted to an incredible number. They generally wrote in such a style, as to shew they all thought themselves Garricks and Cibbers.

The ensuing season the honourable Mrs. Digges died, which made it necessary for her son to go to England. She left eight thousand pounds between her two sons, upon condition that the elder should quit the stage, and take her maiden name of West. Mr. Digges communicated this news to me whilst I was at the theatre, and I received a letter from my mother by the same post, to hasten his journey. The races were to begin the ensuing week, which is usually the harvest of the season. Money, however, must be immediately raised for his expences. I therefore lent the repeating watch with Mr. Still for seventeen guineas, and I believe consented that he should take ten or fifteen from the office. I could not spare any more, as in a few days I should want the two hundred which I had agreed to pay to my inflexible creditor.

Mr. Digges then set off for England, with a promise of returning as soon as possible. But as he was not to play in future, that was immaterial. At the conclusion of the week, I sent to Mr. Still for the two hundred pounds, and received for answer, that he had not a shilling, as he had given Mr. Digges all the money in his possession, and he was two hundred pounds in his debt.

My distraction upon receiving this intelligence is hardly to be conceived. I had requested of Mr. Ferguson, my creditor's

creditor's attorney, to dine with me at Bonnington the day the money was due, when I would pay him. Very fortunately for me, that gentleman possessed the most liberal mind, and was an honour to his profession. Miss Wordley having acquainted him with the real situation of my affairs, for I was too much distressed to do it myself, he agreed to allow me three months to raise the money; and that his client might not be dissatisfied, he remitted her the sum, and took the debt upon himself. So remarkable an instance of humanity claimed my warmest thanks. It was likewise productive of the most heartfelt regret to me. For upon being informed, some years after, that this amiable young man was one of the persons who lost their lives by the falling of the bridge at Edinburgh, I sincerely lamented the unfortunate disaster.

Whilst I had been an inhabitant of Parliament-street, (a period pregnant with sorrows,) I had recommended a gentleman, who wrote a very fine hand, to Mr. Calcraft, as a clerk.

About two years after this, he informed me, that he had an opportunity of going to the East Indies in a very advantageous situation; assuring me, at the same time, that he should ever retain a grateful remembrance of the favours he had received from me, which his future conduct testified that he did.

This gentleman, whose name is Hearne, made many enquiries after me, upon his return to England, and casually hearing of my distress, whilst I was at Edinburgh, he most generously sent me two hundred pounds. This was the most acceptable favour I ever received, as it shewed the gratitude of the donor. Of which I shall have occasion to say more in the course of my narrative.

I must not omit mentioning another event of a similar nature, which likewise happened about this time. I had formerly had a servant, named Daniel Douglas. He lived with me about nine years. But at length, from the gentleman's gallantries in the family, the maids being all partial to him, I recommend him as a domestic to Lord Hume, then governor of Gibraltar. His Lordship made

him his major-domo; and Daniel behaved so much to the satisfaction of his master, that he left him something handsome when he died.

I had been informed that a Mr. Douglas had called at my house several times, when I happened not to be at home. One day, as I was going up the Castle-hill, I was accosted by a person whose face was familiar to me, though I could not recollect him. The poor fellow burst into tears, and having made himself known to me, and enquired after my health, &c. he begged I would permit him to speak to me for a few minutes the first leisure I had, as he was detained in Edinburgh by no other business. I appointed that afternoon to see him at my house, and could not imagine what the business he wished to speak to me upon was; for though I had always endeavoured to deserve the regard of my domestics, I never had been particularly kind to him.

When he came, he informed me that he had saved up eleven hundred pounds. That his wife had taken an inn upon the Dover road, for which, upon being put into possession, they were to pay seven hundred. He then said, he hoped I would forgive his presumption in what he was about to say, but as he was afraid I was not in such circumstances as formerly, if I would be so good as to make use, for my own time, of the remainder of the little fortune I had been the means of his getting, it would afford him more real pleasure than he could receive from disposing of it in any other way.

I could scarcely refrain from tears, at the manner in which this offer was made. It seemed rather as if he had been soliciting a loan than offering a favour. I thanked him cordially for his intended kindness, but declined accepting it; assuring him at the same time, that I did not do so from being hurt at the offer, which gave me singular pleasure, but because I had lately received from Mr. Hearne, whom he well knew, the assistance I then wanted. I added, that I could not think of borrowing the money he had laboured many years for, without being certain of repaying it, even if I was actually pressed for it; I consequently would not contract a debt of such a nature, when I really had no immediate occasion. The

worthy



worthy man reluctantly acquiesced with this declaration, and took his leave, in appearance as much mortified at the refusal of his money, as others would have been, at being dunned for it.

This grateful behaviour of my late servant Daniel, only wants the decorations of Shakespeare's immortalizing pen, to make it as memorable as that of Adam in his As you like it. The honesty and friendship of that venerable servant towards the memory of old Sir Rowland, as he terms Orlando, when represented by Barry, with that honest plainness, and unaffected sensibility, which was never equalled by any other performer, could not affect the weeping audience more than this well-meant offer of Daniel's did me. The impression will never be eradicated from my mind. And that infinitely more from the manner in which the favour was tendered, and the grateful intention of it, than from the service such a sum at that time could have been to me. These were the only two instances of gratitude, among the numerous opportunities I gave for the exertion of it, that ever I met with. But these are sufficient to convince me, that the virtue has an existence, though like the phoenix, its appearance is very rare.

G. A. B.

## LETTER LXXVIII.

August 29, 17—

UPON my first engaging at Edinburgh, the gentlemen of Glasgow offered to build a theatre by subscription, if our company would promise to perform there in the summer. To this we readily consented, as the inhabitants were not only opulent, but liberal to a degree. The theatre being now ready, we formed very agreeable ideas of the jaunt; and that, not only from the views of profit that it presented, but from the favourable ideas we entertained of the place and people. The goddess of Nonsense (for so we had nicknamed Miss Wordley, from her being directly the reverse) was impatient beyond measure for our removal from the metropolis. I had lately left Bonnington, and resided in the city, as the business of

the theatre required my being near it; and upon this occasion, David Hume complimented me with his apartments in the Cannon-gate.

When we were about to set off, after having discharged my bills, I found I had not cash sufficient to defray the expences of the journey; my family consisting of myself, Miss Wordley, and three servants. The chaises were ordered, and expected soon to be at the door. Not knowing how to raise any money upon this emergency, I sent one of my women, whose name was Waterstone, to a watch-maker's in the High-street, to dispose of the silver repeater Mr. Digges had given me. The person I directed her to apply to, had gained a reputation, by making several for that great mechanical genius, the Duke of Argyll.

The chaises were now at the door, and I waited with the greatest impatience for the arrival of the money to enable us to set off. Some hours elapsed without any tidings of my messenger. Her honesty I could not suspect. Her stay therefore could not be accounted for. About four in the afternoon, a person, dressed something like one of our beadles, came to inform me, that a woman belonging to me, was detained about a watch she had offered to sell.

This intelligence crowned my misfortunes. I sent back the chaises which were yet in waiting, and desired Mr. Still would go to regain the poor woman her liberty. When that gentleman got to the watchmaker's, he was informed, that Mr. Digges had purchased the watch of the very person I sent it to. It being invaluable upon account of the workmanship, but from the largeness of its size not very saleable, he had sold it to Mr. Digges somewhat under the mark, and had taken his note for it, payable at the conclusion of the season.

The man said, as he understood Mr. Digges did not intend to return, and as the watch was offered for sale, suspicions arose in his mind that it was not honestly come by; especially as the woman refused leaving it, or telling from whom she came. Mr. Still having thus learnt the circumstance of the affair, to accommodate it as well as he could, returned the repeater to its first owner, upon his

He's agreeing to deliver up Mr. Digges's note, and liberating my servant.

My friendly negotiator then went to endeavour to raise me a fund that should enable me to set out for Glasgow the next morning, it being necessary that we should no longer defer going. He brought me sufficient for the expence of half the journey, and I was obliged to depend upon the purses of my partners for defraying the remainder. Miss Wardley's humour kept my spirits from sinking under all these vexations; and the gloom which overclouded my mind, seemed gradually to dispel every mile we went. So that before we had made much progress in our journey, I assumed a cheerfulness to which I had long been a stranger.

The next day at noon, we saw the delightful city to which we were going, at a little distance before us. The magnificence of the buildings, and the beauty of the river, which the fineness of the day caused to appear, if possible, to greater advantage, gladdened my heart; and I anticipated the pleasure I should have in being received by my friends, who were not only most cordial in their repeated invitations, but whose opulence furnished them with power to fulfil their warm promises of support.

When we arrived at Glasgow, one of the performers exclaimed, "Madam, you are ruined, for you have nothing left but what you have with you in the chaises." I am at a loss, even now, to account for the composure with which I heard this alarming salutation, for I enquired into the cause of it without the least emotion. I was informed, that the stage of the New Theatre had been set on fire the night before, and that all my paraphernalia and wardrobe, which lay there unpacked, had been consumed by the flames.

The conflagration, I found, was occasioned by the following circumstance. A Methodist teacher, who held forth in that city, told his auditors, that he dreamed the preceding night, he was in the infernal regions, at a grand entertainment, where all the Devils in Hell were present, when Lucifer their chief gave for a toast, the health of Mr. —, who had sold his ground to build him a house



upon, (meaning the theatre) and which was to be opened the next day for them all to reign in.

The poor ignorant enthusiastic hearers of this godly preacher, found their enmity against Satan and his subjects instantly inflamed by this harangue; and in order to prevent so alarming an extension of his infernal majesty's empire, they hastened away in a body to the new built play-house, and set the stage on fire. Luckily the flames were extinguished, before any other part of the theatre was consumed, but the whole of my theatrical wardrobe, which lay in the packages upon it, was destroyed. It appeared, that this religious mob had been joined by others, who wished to take advantage of the conflagration; as a great deal of the false trumpery upon the regalia of the mock kings and queens, had been taken away, and, being found of no value, lay scattered about the fields. As the theatre was a mile from the city, and the flames did not burst out so as to become visible, the incendiaries compleated their design, and silently retired. No alarm was therefore given, nor our loss known till the next morning.

Notwithstanding the intelligence I now received was of the utmost importance to me, I heard it with great tranquillity. But poor Miss Wordley, who had lost her little all, lost with it all that philosophy, she, on many former occasions, had preached up to me. Which recalled to my memory these fine lines of Shakespeare\*;

Men  
Can counsel, and give comfort to that grief  
Which they themselves not feel; but tasting it,  
Their counsel turns to passion, which before  
Would give preceptual medicine to rage.  
—'Tis all men's office to speak patience  
To those that wring under the load of sorrow;  
But no man's virtue, nor sufficiency,  
To be so moral when he should endure  
The like himself. —

\* Much Ado about Nothing, "Act V. Scene I." Instead

Instead of throwing myself into violent agitations, and lamenting my loss, as many would have done, I very coolly said, I would go and look at the ruins; and ordered the chaise to drive immediately to the theatre. I there beheld the ashes of all my finery, which had cost many, many hundreds of pounds; and, at that time, upon a moderate computation, were worth nine hundred; there being among them a complete set of garnets and pearls, from cap to stomacher.

When I returned to the inn, I enquired for Mr. Bates; for, as to the other partner, I never had any knowledge of him. I was informed that he was gone to the Exchange, to offer a reward for discovering the incendiaries. But all his endeavours to that purpose were vain. The native firmness of the Caledonians insure their fidelity to each other. For in this affair, as well as that of Captain Porteus, in which, by all accounts, many hundreds were concerned, there was not one person found treacherous enough to give evidence against their partners, relative to the excesses they had been guilty of.

The postillions were obliged to wait the return of Mr. Bates, as it was not in my power to discharge them. When he came, and had sent the chaises away, I desired he would go back to the Exchange, and inform every person he saw, that I was fully determined not to make my appearance upon the Glasgow stage, unless I did so the next evening, according to the plan I had fixed, but which it was not in my power to do for want of clothes. Upon which, one of the principal merchants of the city, by whose interest, chiefly, the theatre had been built, came immediately to the inn, and politely offered me whatever money I wanted. I cheerfully accepted his friendly assistance, and upon my repeating the resolution I had formed, he told me, I should have all the ladies clothes in and about the city, before the evening, if we could get the stage repaired, so that should be no hindrance to us.

It being impracticable for us to perform a Tragedy, as the necessary dresses could not be got ready for some days, we determined to perform "The Citizen," by way of play, and "The Mock Doctor" for the farce. Mr. Bates instantly

Instantly got some industrious carpenters, who nailed down boards for a temporary stage, (the other being entirely consumed) which they covered with carpets, till the damage could be repaired. And before six o'clock, the gentleman so well performed his promise, that from not being mistress of one gown, I found myself in possession of above forty; and some of these almost new, as well as very rich. Nor did the ladies confine themselves to outward garments only. I received presents of all kinds; and from every part of the adjacent country, together with invitations and parties for the whole time of my residence in their neighbourhood.

Every thing was ready by the usual hour, and we played the two pieces just mentioned, to a crowded house. At the conclusion of the piece, one of the principal ladies declared from the boxes, that none of the audience would stir, till all the performers, and even the servants, were safely out of the theatre; lest there might be some personal attack attempted, by those who could commit such an outrage as that of the preceding evening; and the town guard was ordered to escort us into the city.

The capital inhabitants made parties to entertain us; and I can truly say, that I never met with more civility, more festivity, nor more applause, in any place wherever I appeared. Mr. Reddish was the principal man in tragedy, Mr. Aickin in comedy. Whilst I was at Edinburgh, I had prevailed upon a gentleman, who was possessed of some talents, to compile a little piece from the celebrated poem of Ossian; and I appeared in the character of Commela, there, with great success. But at Glasgow the applause I received was beyond all bounds. This little piece alone, tacked to any indifferent comedy, would fill the house, so that it was crowded every night; which tended greatly to relieve me from the fatigue I daily underwent, not only from the duties of my profession, but from the constant round of invitations I was obliged to accept of.

"Macbeth" and "Douglas" were much called for; but these pieces could not be performed, till clothes proper for appearing in them were made and brought from Edinburgh. As I had no black vestment of any kind sent



to me among the numerous ones of different colours, which had been showered upon me by the ladies, I made that an objection to playing the character of Lady Macbeth. Upon which, I was assured by one of the inhabitants, that her Ladyship walked every night, at the castle of Dunstan, dressed in *white* satin. Not being able to refrain from smiling at this piece of information, I was told, with great seriousness, that it was really a fact; of the truth of which I might be convinced, by watching one night only at the castle. I rather chose, however, to give credit to the person from whom I received the account, than be at the trouble of putting the assertion to the test; and played the character, out of the usual form, in white satin.

On the fourth of June there was to be a grand dinner at the Bull Inn, in honour of the day. At this inn I had taken up my residence, from the fulness of the town, and its being situated near the theatre. What made this place of abode the more desirable was, its being an immense, commodious building, capable of accommodating us in every respect. It had been erected by subscription for the reception of the gentlemen belonging to the hunt, in the winter; and in the summer for the people of fashion who live in the environs, and come, at that season, occasionally to Glasgow. There was likewise a large room in it, which in winter was a free mason's lodge. This now served us for a wardrobe.

Miss Wordley seemed frantic with joy at some news she had received from Edinburgh, which induced me to follow her to enquire the cause. When she informed me, that she had heard Mr. Woodward was arrived in that city. On hearing this pleasing intelligence, we prevailed upon Mr. Bates to set off immediately to invite him to join us.

While the rubbish that had been occasioned by the fire was removing, we set about searching to see if we could recover any part of the valuable things I had lost; when, to my great joy and surprize, I found among some of it which the first waggon could not contain, a trunk belonging to me. In it were deposited some clothes, a great deal of linen, and some of my laces. But the chief part

of

of the latter were consumed during the burning of the stage, together with all the trinkets I had of any value. This, however, was a great acquisition, and afforded me the more pleasure, as it was given over for lost.

We had the mortification to find, that the report of Mr. Woodward's being arrived in Scotland was without foundation. This was a disappointment to us indeed. For as this gentleman's character in private life was as amiable, as his public one was celebrated, he would have proved a valuable acquisition in a country, where something more than theatrical merit is necessary to insure approbation.

As the summer drew towards a conclusion, I saw, with infinite regret, the time approach for our return to Edinburgh. There had been an execution in our house at Bonnington, for a debt Mr. Digges had left unpaid. I had, therefore, no settled habitation to go to. But it was not solely on this account, that I regretted leaving Glasgow; the hospitality and friendship I had received from the inhabitants during my stay, had made an indelible impression upon my mind.

Besides, the beauty of the place and of the country around it, are extremely captivating. The meadow, in particular, is beyond description picturesque and charming. It reminds every one that has seen the beautiful village of Haerlem, of the near resemblance of one to the other. On one side of the river, you see the City Bleaching-houses, where multitudes are employed in the different avocations of the linen trade. Some washing, others attending the coppers, and others laying the linen to bleach. On the other side the cattle are grazing in a most delightful pasture, which terminates in a landscape much beyond any description it is in my power to give of it.

We had likewise the pleasure to observe, that our departure was as much regretted by our hospitable entertainers, as we felt ourselves mortified by the separation from them. And it is with the most sensible satisfaction I reflect, that there was not one member of our company, who did not depart without credit to themselves, and honour to the profession.

Upon

Upon my return to Edinburgh I took a small English house in the Cannongate. But finding Mr. Bates had entered into an engagement with Mr. Sheridan, without my knowledge or consent, a liberty diametrically opposite to our agreement, I declined appearing any more. An event which proved of greater consequence to the proprietors, than they had imagined it would; as I afterwards found they played to their loss every night.

Having come to this resolution, I determined to return to London as soon as I conveniently could. And my departure was accelerated by a very unexpected discovery. Another of these revolutions of fortune which had so frequently been my lot, now awaited me. Having one day received a letter from Mr. Digges, now West, with a demand for a larger sum than I could spare, I could not help being much affected whilst I read it. Upon which a gentleman, who happened to be present, told me he was well assured the union that had taken place between Mr. Digges and me could not be valid, as to his knowledge a former wife was still living. Being alarmed at this information, and doubting the truth of it, the gentleman promised to send me well-authenticated proof of it as soon as he got to London, for which place he was just setting off.

Accordingly I received, soon after, an affidavit, confirming the truth of this assertion, by which I was again set at liberty; and found, as I had done more than once, an union I thought to be *indissoluble*, suddenly dissolved. The gentleman at the same time informed me, that he had seen Mrs. Digges, who told him that she had announced her death in the public papers, in order to deceive her husband, by whom she was apprehensive of being molested.

She might have spared herself the trouble and expence of such a manœuvre, as I am very certain he never meant to see her after their separation, his affections being at that time *really* fixed upon another person. I must here stop to declare, that I acquit Mr. Digges of any *intended* deception towards me. Had he not been unfortunately embarrassed in his circumstances by a former connection, the delicacy of his tenderness, and the unremitting attention he



he always paid me, would have prevented my having the least cause of complaint. By what a chain of sand do all the hopes of poor blind mortals hang!—Take what steps we will to render it durable, even those which are apparently the result of prudence, and they cannot insure permanency to it. Some unexpected stroke breaks the contexture, and our most sanguine expectations are scattered by the winds.—No woman has surely so much reason, as I have repeatedly said, to complain of these sudden attacks of fortune, as myself.—Be my intentions ever so pure, and well planned, some incidental obstruction frustrates the purposed end.—It is a long time since I troubled you with any complaints of this nature.—Bear therefore with this, as the occasion so pointedly excites it.

# LETTER LXXIX.

Sept. 5. 17—

**T**HE incredible marks of friendship I had received during my residence in Scotland, claimed every acknowledgment on my part. To shew, therefore, that I was not insensible of this indulgence, I inserted the following advertisement in the public papers, every day for the month I staid after my disengagement, in order to pay my respects to those who had particularly honoured me with their patronage.

“As Mrs. Bellamy has dissolved her engagement with the proprietors of the Theatre in the Cannongate, she begs leave to return her warmest thanks to the public in general, and to those friends in particular, who have done her the honour to patronize her in so flattering a degree, since her residence in Scotland, of which she will ever retain the most grateful sense, as their favours are deeply impressed in her heart.”

N. B. All persons who have any legal demand upon Mrs. Bellamy, are requested to deliver in their accounts at her house opposite Lord Milton's, in the Cannongate, within one month of this date, in order to receive the same.”

The

The first among my patrons was the present first Baron, the worthy Mr. Montgomery, a gentleman as well known for his goodness as his great knowledge. He not only extricated me from the persecuting spirit of an insatiable creditor, as before related, but introduced me to the ladies of his family, who were the most amiable of women. One of these is the present Viscountess Townshend, whose goodness excels her beauty, though that is so acknowledged. In this circle I had the happiness of being introduced to the late Duchess of Douglas, who ever after honoured me with her patronage. These ladies gave me a general invitation, and not only received my visits with pleasure, but returned them.

We had besides formed a little party of particular friends, who met once or twice a week at my house. We termed this sociable meeting the "Nonsense Club." Miss Wordley was fixed upon for the goddess. And I really believe, as much innocent mirth, wit, and good humour abounded in it, as ever did in any assembly of the same nature. Every body was anxious to please. Ill-humour, ill-manners, and all indecency were banished from it, and instruction and mirth only reigned. The gentlemen that were admitted to our little society were chiefly students and young men possessed of learning and understanding greatly above the common rank.

The Dean of the Faculty had likewise been a volunteer in my cause upon the occasion before mentioned; and though the suit was pending two terms, the only expence I was at, was for printing the cases, which came but to a trifle. Upon a moderate computation, this suit would have cost hundreds in the English courts of common-law.

There was a circumstance attending this litigation which I own greatly surprised me. The great advocate, Mr. Lockhart, who was retained by my opponent, when it came before the court, bestowed the most virulent abuse upon me. Every thing that even the utmost malice of an enraged bad woman could have suggested, he loaded me with. But when he afterwards honoured me with a visit in my dressing-room, he told me he was much concerned at his having been misinformed. "However," continued he, "do not give yourself any uneasiness about

" what

" what I said in the court. For what I uttered in the pleadings, except what immediately related to the case in point, was not paid the least attention to."

And indeed, a moment's reflection convinced me of the truth of the learned advocate's observation. For my being both before, and afterwards, caressed by ladies of the most exemplary character, as well as of exalted rank, assured me, that whatever had been spoken to my disadvantage, upon the occasion, had not gained any credit. Had that been the case, I should not have retained their good opinion; but on the contrary, I was as much caressed in private, as admired in public. The very flattering reception I met with wherever I went, banished every apprehension; and clearly evinced, that they were merely words of course.

But notwithstanding I was fortunate enough to escape the effects of this official scandal, how many are there whose future lives are rendered unhappy by it! The indiscriminate and generally unmerited abuse with which such as are so unfortunate as to have any concerns in a court of justice, are bespattered by the counsel of their opponents, calls for reprehension. It affords but very little consolation to the unjustly abused person, to hear it afterwards said, " I am sorry for it" — " I was misinformed" — " It will not be regarded." — The bur of scandal sticks close — The impression is not easily defaced — It goes into the world; tinctures every action, and causes the whole of the future conduct to be viewed with a suspicious eye. — That gentlemen of enlarged minds, as those belonging to the bar are known to be, (a few excepted) should condescend to have recourse to so mean and unjust a method for promoting the cause they are retained in, is really to be wondered at. Those who are naturally revengeful and abusive, may rejoice at having an opportunity of indulging a propensity which gives them pleasure; but an humane and generous person, will certainly refrain from every unnecessary exertion of it. — I think I have made some similar observations in a former letter. These, however, shall go, as the custom I am censuring, though it has hitherto been considered as perfectly allowable, is much complained of, and cries aloud



aloud for relief.—Let me just add, that though the circumstance before mentioned has given rise to this digression, a *general* reproof is only intended.

In consequence of not being able to discharge the whole of the debts I had contracted here, I applied to Mr. Hearne, the gentleman I have already mentioned, who immediately sent me two hundred pounds. But that sum not being adequate to the demands made upon me, which were more considerable than I apprehended, I wrote to Sir George Metham to request his assistance. By the return of the post I received a remittance for the sum I required, together with a very pressing invitation to spend some days with him, upon my return to London; at his seat at North Cave, my son being there for the holidays.

Accordingly, at the expiration of the month, Miss Wordley and myself set off for Haddington, to which place some of our Edinburgh friends accompanied us, and spent the evening. The next morning we continued our journey; and as we had leisure, I was determined to take a view, as we went on, of every place that excited curiosity. This intention, however, was prevented by a disagreeable event which happened early on our journey, and makes me shudder whilst I relate it.

As we were passing through a village, not far from Berwick, an infant had crept into the high-road, and set itself down in the middle of it. The driver of the chaise going on Jehu-like, did not perceive it; and Miss Wordley and myself, being employed in reading, neither did we observe it till the chaise had gone over its legs. Providentially, my screams prevented the carriage from going over its head. The accident had so violent an effect upon me, that I was taken our senseless, and it was some time before I could be restored to life.

As soon as I recovered, my first thoughts were bestowed upon the maimed little one, of whose disaster we had unfortunately, but innocently, been the occasion. Its parents being now returned from their rural work in the fields, I ordered every possible care to be taken of it; and I am certain I suffered more pain of mind, than the child did of body. Had there been a surgeon near, I should

should not have pursued my journey; but I could not think of letting the poor baby be neglected through my acute feelings. I therefore, though very unfit to travel, hastened on to the next town, where I was recommended to a gentleman of eminence in his profession, whom I immediately dispatched to his relief. Before he went, I requested him to write to me, as soon as possible, at Sir George Metham's; as I was not only anxious for the recovery of the child, but because the expence of his attendance could not then be ascertained.

A few weeks after my arrival at Cave, I had the pleasure of hearing, not only from the surgeon himself, but from a person who resided in the village, that through the skill of the former, and another trifling circumstance, the child was perfectly recovered. The parents were likewise made happy, and the surgeon amply rewarded by Sir George; who had a tear for pity, and a hand ever ready to relieve the distressed, while he had the power.

This was one of those eventual circumstances, which appears at first to be a great misfortune, but in the end is productive of the greatest good. For I have since been informed that the father of the child, a poor industrious peasant with a large family, was upon the point of being turned out of his little habitation, and having his goods seized, by an unfeeling landlord, at the time the accident happened. But this was prevented by Sir George's timely bounty; who not only rescued him from his present distress, but enabled him and his family to live in comfort ever after.

Oh how I envied Sir George his feelings upon this occasion! For the exquisite sensation such a benevolent act must excite in a susceptible mind is truly enviable. Though envy is a vice, with which, thank Heaven, I am totally unacquainted, yet I never heard of the performance of a generous action, but a wish instantly arises in my breast, that I had been the happy person who possessed the power with the inclination to perform it. Whether this desire of robbing another of so great a happiness, falls under the denomination of envy, I leave to the casualts to determine; but it is a desire I cannot suppress.

press. — To light up the face of distress into gladness, and to pour the balm of comfort into the wounded mind, is the truest felicity the human heart is capable of feeling.

I was so much indisposed when I got to Alawick, from the agitation I had undergone, that I was obliged to remain there some days, before I was able to view that beautiful Gothic Castle, which I did not care to leave the place without doing. I have, however, at present, very little recollection of it. Sir George had wrote me word, that he would send his chaise to meet me at York, and convey me from thence to his house; but unluckily his servant had gone to a favourite house of his, and not to the Post-House, where we were set down, and the people of the inn at which the man had set up his horses, were so very illiberal as to deny his being there, when I sent to enquire.

The morning after my arrival at York, I went to pay my devoirs at the convent, where I had spent so many happy hours, during my former residence in that city. I found but few of those alive with whom I had then been acquainted, and learnt that the good old chaplain had for some time been gone to enjoy the reward of his piety. As I purposed proceeding to Cave that afternoon, I was obliged to decline a very pressing invitation, the pious inhabitants of this blessed abode gave me to spend some time with them, and took my leave loaded with benevolent wishes.

Upon my return to the inn, I was not very well pleased at still hearing no news of Sir George's carriage, my finances not being in the most flourishing state. I therefore was necessitated to make use of a hired one, in which we set off. When we arrived at a place about twenty miles from York, I left my companion at the inn, and proceeded to Sir George's alone. I wished to reconnoitre, and be certain of a kind reception, before I introduced her. If my reception should not be as warm as my invitation, or if there happened to be any company I did not like to join, I was determined to return from his honour's the same evening. But I beg Sir George's pardon for even the bare supposition. Had I considered  
rightly,



rightly, I could have had no cause for apprehension on either point, particularly the latter, as he had always been remarkably careful in the choice of the company he introduced me to.

When I approached the house, I saw the owner of it at a distance; and as the road I was in, led to his mansion only, he was assured the visit must be to him; he therefore hastened to the chaise. I was much surprized at seeing him alone; nor did he seem to be left so at my being without a companion. As soon as I came up to him, he cried out, "My dear Pop! how comes it that you are by yourself and in a hack? My chaise has been waiting for you several days at York. I began to be alarmed at your stay, and sent George, and my nephew, and some other yesterday, to make enquiries about you. But where is Miss Wordley? I hoped to have had the pleasure of her company." From so cordial a reception, I no longer harboured a doubt of my presence giving pleasure at Cave. I then informed Sir George, that I had left Miss Wordley at a village some miles from his house; upon which he dispatched the chaise to bring her.

As I entered the hospitable mansion, I had the pleasure of seeing the faithful valet I have formerly had occasion to mention. The worthy fellow absolutely shed tears of joy upon my hand as he kissed it. He had conceived such an affection for my son, that I looked upon him more like a relation than a servant. He had lived with his master from his childhood; having been brought up in a school, erected by Mr. Montgomery, Sir George's father, for the education of the children of such of his tenants and neighbours, as could not afford to bestow one on them. At this period, most of Sir George's servants, both men and women, had partaken of the old gentleman's goodness. I am sorry to be able to add, that I heard with infinite concern some years after, that Sir George had discharged his faithful Sheppard, through the misrepresentations of a favourite mistress.

We had not been long seated, when we beheld Miss Wordley approach, attended by the cavalcade which had been dispatched in quest of me. The Goddess of non-

sense

sense forgetting it was Sunday, had placed herself in the window, and sat very composedly *at work*. So unusual a sight drew the attention of those who passed, and soon raised a crowd before the inn. My son and his companions happening to ride through the village, at the same time, in their return, their notice was likewise attracted by the novelty. This gave Miss Wordley an opportunity of seeing my younger, whom she immediately knew by the great resemblance he bore to his father. Upon which, being above all ceremony, and her apprehensions of a favourable reception being removed by the sight of the chaise, she threw up the window, made herself known to the young gentlemen, and being seated in the chaise, was conducted by four squires on horseback, *en grand train*, to join us.

After tea, my host desired he might have the pleasure of shewing me to my apartment, as he had something particular to say to me. I arose and followed him. When we got into my room, I was not a little surprized to see him assume an air of consequence, which no one knew better than himself how to do. He then, with a grave countenance, said, that he was very much concerned to tell me, he had something very disagreeable to inform me of. I began to fear, from this exordium, that I had been too hasty in sending away the chaise. But my apprehensions soon vanished, when he told me, with great solemnity, that during the distraction occasioned by our separation, he had rashly bound himself, by the most sacred vows, never more to have any tender connection with me.

The conclusion of this speech had such an effect upon me, that I was in danger of forgetting the graces, so far as to burst into a fit of laughter. But recollecting myself as well as I could, I begged he would not be under the confusion of an apology; for could I have supposed, that in the present situation of things it would have been otherwise, I certainly should not have accepted his invitation. I perceived that his vanity was much hurt at this declaration, and was concerned at it. He had not supposed that I should receive a circumstance of such great import with the unaffected indifference I did. He expected

that I should regret the restriction, with the same poignant feelings he had declared he himself felt; and his chagrin upon the occasion was visible. However, upon rejoining the company, he re-assumed his good humour and politeness. In both these Sir George exceeded the generality of his sex, particularly in the latter. I cannot recollect a person amongst all my acquaintance, except the Dowager Lady Harrington, who knew how to acquit themselves in doing the honours of their house, with more ease and attention. An indisputable proof of a good heart, improved by a polite education.

**G. A. B.**

Sept. 22, 1744

And when I recollected the manner of this nobleman's the residence of **LETTER LXXX** the residence of Lord Downe, I could not refrain from shedding tears, as we passed

WHILST I continued at Cave, every body seem-  
ed to vie with each other, which could most  
succeed in pleasing me. But my anxiety to procure an  
engagement at the theatre, made me at times very un-  
easy. Such a step was absolutely necessary, to clear me  
from the debts with which I was encumbered; for not-  
withstanding the sums I had paid, I still owed above four  
thousand pounds. Sir George expressed to me a desire of  
selling an estate, in order to extricate both himself and  
me, which he assured me he would do, as soon as it was  
in his power; and he gave me a commission to speak to  
Alderman Cracroft, upon my return to London, to look  
out for a purchaser.

In the mean time, he wrote to his cousin, Lord Eglington, desiring he would use his interest with Mr. Beard, the then acting manager, in order to replace me in my former station at Covent-Garden theatre. By his lordship's answer, I had the mortification to find, that the proprietors were desirous of paying so heavy a salary as mine. Mrs. Ward and Miss Macklin, had divided between them the characters which used to be in my possession. His lordship was therefore informed, that there was no room for me. My pride, as well as the prudential motives which made me solicitous for an engagement, tended to aggravate the contents of this lordship's letter.

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and to render the disappointment the more irksome. So that notwithstanding the unremitting attention which was shewn me at Cave, as the winter was now advanced, I determined to visit London.

Accordingly, Miss Wordley, my son, and little self, set off for the great city; after having spent three months in all the pleasure that agreeable society, good cheer, good humour, and unembittered pleasantries can afford. I left this seat of hospitality with regret; which would have been greatly augmented, could I have then foreseen that I should never more have been an inhabitant of it.

I could not refrain from shedding tears, as we passed the residence of my late worthy friend, Lord Downe. And when I recollected the manner of this nobleman's death, and that no public honours have been ever paid to his memory, a gloom overcasts my mind, and I pay him the tribute of a sigh.

At Stamford, I was most agreeably surprised to meet with Lord Granby, who did me the honour to spend the evening with me. I could not help observing to my great surprise, that during the whole time we were together, his lordship never mentioned the name of Mr. Calcraft. This was the more singular, from a report which was then current, and which I shall explain more fully in my annexed letter to that gentleman. Sir George had promised to allow me seven guineas a week; and he assured me that he would soon be in town. The commission he empowered me to give to Mr. Alderman Crabroft, afforded me double pleasure; as independent of my own expectations from it, I should be enabled by it to shew my gratitude to one of the best of men. I own the satisfaction I received, from finding myself thus reconciled to the person on whom I first bestowed my heart, was very great. A series of the most complicated treachery had induced me to use him ill, at the very time I professed him to be my whole self, and the assurance of this future friendship was flattering in the extreme. Whilst it promised to be serviceable to me, it did me honour. The lines I have already quoted from Shakespeare's *Midsummer Night's Dream*, relative to the

the crosses of love, are fall as applicable to this situation, as to that where I applied them. I might here, also, with as much propriety say, "the course of true love never did run smooth."

Upon our arrival in London, we were let down at my mother's in Brewer street, whose house, very fortunately, happened to be empty. I have already observed, that she usually let it to persons of distinction; the profits of which, added to the interest of the money she had saved, together with her pension, enabled her to live genteelly, and keep up an acquaintance with those who were greatly her superiors.

She consented to let me have her first floor, and undertook to pay all my incidental expences with the money Sir George Metham had promised to allow me. But as she knew the capriciousness of his disposition, (which indeed turned out as she expected) and the precariousness of making an engagement at the theatres, when both the companies were settled, she objected to Miss Wordley's continuing with me. Though this objection was the result of prudence, it gave me infinite pain. However, as taking up my abode in a parent's house, must appear more eligible in the eyes of the world, than in any other lodging I could get, I was obliged to consent, though with great reluctance, to that young lady's settling near me. Soon after my return from Scotland, Mr. Dodds sent me a receipt for a considerable sum which I stood indebted to him for books. I accepted it as a genteel compliment, for having been the successful heroine of his brother's tragedy of *Glencoe*.

I now wrote to Mr. Digges, (I should say, Mr. West) to acquaint him that we must never meet again. As I had nothing to reproach him with, I did not trouble him with any upbraidings. He had not been guilty of any deception towards me; and, barring his unhappy jealous remembrance, I must acknowledge that he strove, by every tender, indulgent attention, to please me. Nor did we ever meet after, but once in the street, and twice at the theatre. A circumstance happened the night of our arrival in town, which, though trifling in itself, as it shewed my much

much-loved son's affection, I cannot forbear relating. When lights were brought, observing they were of tallow, without seeming to take any manner of notice, he immediately went out and purchased wax. Having done this, his delicacy induced him to call me, upon some slight pretence, into another room, whilst they were changed. Such a mark of attention and respect, could not fail of giving the most heart-felt pleasure to a fond mother. And I have the satisfaction to pay this just tribute to his beloved memory, (for he is now no more) that to the day of his death, he preserved the same unremitting affection and assiduity to please me. The next day I took him to Eton, as he had greatly trespassed upon the limits of his holidays.

Upon my return I visited Mark-lane, to consult my good friend the Alderman; when I opened my communications, which he gladly undertook. I had always, even in my most encumbered situation, preserved my credit with him. Being himself the most punctual of men in all his dealings, he never excused the want of punctuality in others. He, however, usually gave his clients permission to name their own time of payment, but that he expected them to abide by. The Alderman had paid my creditors such considerable sums the year of my unfortunate expatriating, that he not only kept them in good humour, but prevailed upon them all, (except the one who had so cruelly persecuted me) to promise that they would do every thing in their power to serve me.

I had entered the room upon my first going in, with my usual cheerfulness, and announced myself, by saying, "Here I am." Mrs. Cracroft received me with her usual affection. Mr. Cracroft then asked me if I had any hopes of an engagement? To which I replied in the negative. But I told him what Sir George had promised to do for me; at which he was much pleased. And as the estate, intended to be sold, was in a registered county, he had no doubt, he said, but he should be able to dispose of it to advantage. I next acquainted him, that I should endeavour to procure an engagement, that was only for a few nights, in order to be entitled to a benefit, which I had every reason to hope would prove a lucrative



live as usual. I therefore requested that he would get my letter of licence renewed; and likewise raise money upon the plate which I had left in his hands, at once to pay himself what would be due to him in a few days, (for he was to be paid his debt at stated periods) and to support me till Sir George came to town, as I could not hope to receive any supply from that gentleman, till the estate was sold.

During my return home, a thought struck me, which was to write to the Honourable Mr. James Brudenell, now Lord Brudenell, who had formerly honoured me with his friendship, but since my separation from his intimate acquaintance, Sir George Metham, had desisted from addressing me. As I was in hopes that his coolness would subside, now the cause of it was removed, by my reconciliation with the man he so greatly esteemed, I presumed by letter to solicit the honour of his interest with the proprietors of the theatre. Should I be so happy as to succeed in obtaining this request, I could not then, I knew, entertain the least doubt of an engagement; it being the distinguished mark of character in that truly noble family, whenever they espouse a cause, to make use of every means in their power to promote it. Would some of high rank that I could name, follow such bright examples, we should not so frequently hear of broken promises.

The observance of a promise is held by me in so sacred a light, that I cannot forbear expatiating upon it whenever opportunity offers. (I shall) therefore, just remark, by way of addition to what I have said upon the subject in a former letter, that my feelings, when I have been obliged to postpone the performance of a verbal engagement, through the want of ability to accomplish my wishes, are pungent in the extreme. I am even of opinion, that an injury received, will by no means cancel an obligation of this nature, or warrant a breach of it. — And so far is my attention engaged by anxiety for the fulfillment of those I have entered into, that there is one in particular, which will be a constant source of disquietude to me till it is in my power to discharge it.

The morning after, I was honoured with a visit from the gentleman I had wrote to, when he not only promised to exert his interest in my favour, but made me happy, by assuring me of the renewed patronage of the ladies of his family.

Two mornings after this, I happened to lie in bed longer than usual. Although I can rise at any hour, with the greatest alertness, when any concern, whether of business or pleasure calls me; yet when that is not the case, you know I am no *Matinee*. Being thus indolently inclined, Miss Wordley came running into my bed-chamber, and, with joy impressed on her countenance, desired I would make haste and rise, as Johnny Beard was coming to see me.

I imagined Miss Wordley meant Mr. Beard from Glasgow, a gentleman who had been a warm partisan of mine, whilst I was in that city. I could not entertain the most distant idea, that the manager of Covent Garden theatre would so far lessen his consequence, as to visit a performer whom he had so recently rejected; alledging, as he had done to Lord Eglington, that musical pieces were the staple commodity of that house. I found, however, to my great surprise, to be the patentee himself. Having saluted me, with his usual cordial civility, he informed me, laughing, that he was come ambassador from the junto, and had the happiness to be deputed by them to engage me; adding, that there was a necessity for the engagement's being signed that very evening.

Upon my expressing my astonishment at the celerity required, and the urgency made use of, he acquainted me, that he had been honoured with a visit from Colonel Brudenell, who had peremptorily demanded that I should be engaged in four and twenty hours, or else, he should be obliged to compel them to a compliance. As the resolution of this gentleman was well known; and, likewise, that he was distinguished by having the ear of royalty; the proprietors thought it better to comply with his demand, than to risk incurring the displeasure of a person whose favour was of such importance to them.

As a further consideration, they knew he had great influence over all the young men of quality, many of whom

would be happy in having an opportunity of breaking chandeliers, and pulling up benches.

It must be supposed that I was not a little mortified, when I considered that a performer, who had always been esteemed of consequence, and who had every reason to conclude herself in some estimation with the public, should, according to the stage phrase, be forced upon the managers. I was, however, consoled by the reflection, that I was still honoured with the friendship of my worthy benefactor Mr. Brudenell, who had induced his brother the Colonel, to espouse my cause so warmly.

I immediately sent my good friend, Alderman Cracroft, intelligence of this unexpected success. He was much pleased to hear of it; but acquainted me at the same time, of his having been informed, that my inexorable prosecutrix had bought up two notes of mine, in order to make her debt above a thousand pounds; by which she intended to prevent me from taking the benefit of any act of insolvency. And this she had done, notwithstanding I had regularly paid her the stipulated two hundred pounds a year, and had given a proof of my honest intentions, by scorning even a thought of taking advantage of an act, at the time I owed near twice the sum I now did. He therefore advised me by all means to apply to Comte Haslang with whom I had formerly had the honour to be upon the most friendly terms, to request that he would retain me for his house-keeper, as a security for my person.

The application was no sooner made, than granted, and my protection was drawn up nearly in these words:

"WHEREAS George Anne Bellamy, my house-keeper, informs me, that she has contracted some debts which she is anxious to pay; and as she is offered an engagement at Covent-Garden theatre, I grant her my leave to perform at the said theatre, upon this condition only, that she appropriates her whole salary for the use of her creditors."

"Signed, De Haslang."

The house-keeper who was named in the above document, had wholly consumed the money which I had given her for her salary.



## G. A. BELLAMY.

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The next day, my engagement at Covent Garden theatre was publicly announced in the papers, together with my intended appearance, the Friday following, in the character of Cleonora.

I had now obtained the summit of my present hopes; and as I knew your feelings are set in unison with my own, I dare say you will enjoy with me this momentary respite of mine from trouble. A momentary respite I call it. For as Eloisa says, upon reading Abbiard's Letters: "When e'er thy name I find, some sure misfortune follows close behind." So, with me, fresh troubles tread upon the heels of a relaxation from pain; as the hurricanes in the West Indies, and other countries subject to them, are suddenly preceded by a dead calm.

G. A. B.

## LETTER LXXXI.

Now imagined my person to be secure, and that all my affairs were settled, except that of my obdurate female creditor, and even her I had now no apprehension from, as I concluded she would take the yearly sum she had agreed to do, rather than attempt breaking through the laws of nations by attacking a person, who was actually the known domestic of a foreign minister; and as I was certain that I should be able to pay her the stipulated sum, from the produce of my benefits, as it was not due till the April following, I set my heart at rest upon that score. I was likewise perfectly happy, that notwithstanding my sudden decampment in the middle of the season, I had nothing to apprehend from the loss of the public favour; as the very morning the play I was to appear in was advertised, every place in the house was taken.

But to my very great mortification, I found the tranquillity which I had assumed to be fallacious, and the serene prospect that seemed to present itself, as unsubstantial as the baseless fabric of a dream. The house-keeper who lived with me during my abode in Jermyn-street, and in whom I had wholly confided, had appro-

printed the money allowed for the expences of the house to her own use; and by bringing me in false vouchers, made me believe every thing was paid for, by which means, I found myself two hundred pounds more in debt than I thought for. With the money thus fraudulently obtained, she had purchased herself a husband, whom she accompanied to Switzerland, his native country.

This occasioned me many unwelcome visitors, and obliged me to be troublesome once more, to my good friend Mr. Hearne, who lent me the money, and I discharged all their bills. I now concluded I was exonerated from all claims that could be made upon me, but I was still deceived. Upon the renewal of my letter of licence, I had sent it to Mr. Deard, to whom I owed about seventeen pounds, for him to sign. I did this as a mere matter of form; for as I had expended large sums with his father as well as himself, I had no apprehensions about such a trifle.

But instead of signing it, Mr. Deard sent me word he would call upon me. This he did, on the morning of the day I was once more to exhibit myself to the public. He was informed that I was engaged, and could not see him. But as he was very pressing, and had formerly been very obliging in lending me diamonds, I naturally imagined his business was something of the same purport. No words, however, can express my fright and astonishment, when he informed me, that he had a demand upon me for one hundred and odd pounds, for a pair of ear-rings he had lent me, and which he told me had been pledged at Mr. Watson's, in Prince's-street, Leicester-fields.

Had the snakey head of Medusa been presented to my view, I could not have been more petrified than I was at receiving this information. The pair of ear-rings had been lent me before I left London, and when I had no longer any occasion for them, I returned them by a person I thought I could entrust, but I now found she had been dishonest enough to pawn them. Mr. Deard told me, that he was sensible I knew nothing of the affair; but that did not exonerate me from being accountable for them. Had I returned them myself, as I certainly ought

to have done, it would have prevented this disagreeable transaction. What made this circumstance the more singular was, that I had sent the letter of licence, when it was first drawn to Mr. Deard, and he had signed it for the sum before mentioned. The unhappy wretch who committed this breach of trust, was in possession of a fortune at the time she did it, and had paid the debt of nature only a few months before I was made acquainted with her dishonesty. She had before borrowed a watch of mine, set with diamonds, which she had also pledged; but in compassion to her youth and family, I did not proceed to extremities. There was no resource now left, but to pay the money. For this purpose I sent once more to Mr. Hearn. That worthy man came immediately, and settled the affair, but not without reproaching Mr. Deard, in the severest terms, for deferring to inform me of this untoward transaction till the day appointed for my appearance, which he well knew must be a very improper time to discompose my mind. He told me, as my being in Scotland was no secret, he ought to have wrote to me there, that I might have had the earliest information possible of an affair which so nearly concerned me. As Mr. Hearn had formerly paid his father and him large sums of money upon my account, this reprehension came with double efficacy from his lips. Mr. Deard apologized for the omission, by alleging, that as he knew me to be quite innocent of the affair, he feared the knowledge of it would have affected me too much at such a distance; and as he knew my principle, he had not entertained the least doubt of receiving the money upon my return to town. This unlucky accident disconcerted me greatly; but I was really angry at an offer of more diamonds, which he had brought with him, to decorate me. After what had passed, I rejected them with some asperity; and I then formed a resolution of never borrowing any jewels in future, but of Lady Pyrawley, which I considered as my own; her Ladyship having frequently declared, that she had willed all those she possessed to me, upon her demise.

The



The apprehensions naturally attendant on a first appearance, can be judged of only by a performer. And this is greatly heightened, where there is an anxiety to preserve reputation in a profession which has been very hardly acquired. The ill-judged visit of Mr. Deard, made no inconsiderable addition to the perturbations I experienced upon this occasion. They were, however, soon removed by the incessant plaudits I received from every part of the house. But encouraging as these were, they did not gratify my feelings so much, as the splendid appearance, of most of my former patronesses. Among them I saw with pleasure, all the ladies belonging to the family of the gentleman that had procured my engagements. The managers, encouraged by the reiterated marks of approbation which were bestowed upon me at the conclusion of the piece, very *injudiciously* gave it out for the next evening. They did not consider that this was an opera night, and consequently so great a show of beauty was not to be expected to grace the boxes. Besides, the author being now dead, as well as most of his friends and supporters, and the distress being so very deep that few persons could stand the effects of it, the piece was not at this time held in so high estimation as it once was. It consequently did not succeed the second night, though played after in the course of the winter.

But I must observe, that the managers have it always in their power to depress a performer, even if possessed of much greater merit than ever I could boast; and I am well persuaded, that if the greatest actor that ever was, and, in my humble opinion, ever will be, had not had the management of himself, the choice of his characters, and the timing of the representations, he would not have retained the estimation he so justly deserved, and carried with him to the grave. The truth of the foregoing assertion will be more fully proved, by his treatment of the two first female performers that ever trod the stage, the deservedly celebrated Cibber, and Clive.

Miss Elliot, a very beautiful young woman, and who had great talents, had got possession of all my parts in comedy, except Lady Powpley, Juliet, and two or three others, were restored me by Miss Macklin, but I had not

much

quick employment at the theatre. This, however, did not give me so great concern as it would have done formerly; for my attendance at his Excellency Comte d'Ang's, engrossed every day a considerable part of my time. Mr. Beard informed me, one evening, that "Coriolanus" was commanded for the following Thursday. I immediately pointed out to him, the impracticability of my recovering such a part as Verrinus in a day. He answered me very short, that I must positively play it, as I had been expressly named; and, consequently, it must be so. So flattering a distinction could not fail of affording me the greatest pleasure; and exciting my utmost emulation. But the very anxiety which urged me to excel, made me the more imperfect; and I had the mortification to feel, that I never played so ill in my life. This failure was greatly exaggerated, by being contrasted with the success I had usually met with in this character. It had always been esteemed one of those in which I most shone. Indeed, to speak the truth, I verily believe, that no performer, entitled to the least merit, could so completely have massacred a Roman matron, as I unfortunately did that night. My second mortification was relative to Lady Townley. As I had always gained great reputation in that character, had it been properly announced, there was every reason to conclude that the audience would have been brilliant; but being only substituted in the place of an opera upon the indisposition of a singing performer, it was consequently represented to a very indifferent house. Mr. Woodward had at this period dissolved the partnership, which he had very injudiciously entered into with Barry. This gentleman, as I have already observed, had accumulated, by his uncommon talents, and his economy, the sum of eleven thousand pounds. Upon his having some dispute with the great Roccus, who it is well known, could bear no brother near the throne, he went to Ireland, as before related; where, after four years labour and vexation, he found himself stripped of every guinea he had been possessed of, besides being involved in the joint debts. He had therefore commenced a suit

a suit in Chancery against his late partner, and returned to England.

The subsequent winter he engaged at Covent-Garden, where his success was attended with great advantage to the proprietors. This excellent actor, was known in the theatre to have formerly been my professed admirer. The attention he now seemed to pay me, was therefore immediately set down to the same account. Miss Elhier's ill health obliging her often to decline playing, all the characters I had once possessed now reverted to their owner, which occasioned Mr. Woodward and myself, to appear generally in the same pieces.

Unfortunately for me, a disagreement subsisted between him and the manager, although they had formerly lived in the strictest intimacy. Mr. Woodward's seeming partiality towards me, consequently involved me in Mr. Beard's displeasure. Another circumstance tended to augment this unmerited impression: The manager had lately married Mr. Rich's daughter, with whom, as I have informed you, I was some years back so intimate. This lady, however, having indiscreetly repeated some conversation which passed at Mr. Calcraft's table, he desired I would decline receiving her visits. A great coolness was the result, and we never after were upon friendly terms. I can account no other way for this alteration in the behaviour of the manager, which had always been cordial till that event took place.

Sir George Metham at length came to town; and, soon after his arrival, he desired I would invite Mr. Alderman Cracroft and Mr. Forrest to dinner, in order to settle the preliminary steps towards the disposal of the estate he proposed to sell. He, upon this occasion, repeated the promise he had made me, when at Cave, of discharging all my debts, as soon as he received the purchase money. But ill fortune was still to pursue me. Mr. Cracroft was not able, among all his connections, to get any one to purchase the estate at the price set upon it. The hopes I had indulged, and with so good a prospect of their completion, were consequently frustrated; for a coolness soon after took place, which obliterated all these professions. I and lost I . . .



and the money I expected, went to purchase an annuity for a lady he afterwards formed a connection with.

When my benefit came to be fixed, the manager and myself had some words relative to Miss Wordley's performing on the occasion. That young lady wished to try her fortune upon the London stage. I desired much to indulge her, as I was at this time so attached to her, that I feared she would be obliged to enter into some country company, or go to Ireland, if she could not get an engagement in town. The play performed on my night, was "Romeo and Juliet," and the after-piece was, "Miss in her Teens," in which she was to make her *entrée* in

Tag. I succeeded in carrying my point as to the introduction of my friend, and the receipt was the greatest that had ever been known. My great gold tickets, however, failed, for I received but one hundred from Lord Holderness, fifty a-piece from General Monkton, Lord Granby, and Lord Pigot, and one fifty in a blank cover, which I have often suspected came from Mr. Woodward.

September 30, 17—

LETTER LXXXII.

THE day after, Sir George Metham sent to inform me that my son was much indisposed, and requested me to come to Palace-yard. Having a visitant with me, that was just come from Scotland, I could not obey the summons till after dinner. I then went, with an excuse of returning as soon as possible; having been informed by the servant, who brought the message, that my dear George had only a slight cold.

When I arrived, I found Mr. Macklin *tête-à-tête* with Sir George, who had informed the baronet that I was going to be married to Mr. Woodward. The absurdity of such a report could only be laughed at, on its being mentioned to me; and answered with, "Yes, to be sure!" After the veteran was departed, Sir George pressed me much to stay the evening. I told him I could

not

not possibly comply with his request, as I had left company at home, to whom I had promised, and good manners obliged me to return. Notwithstanding this, forgetting his usual politeness, he entreated me again to stay; and, in spite of all his usual non-chalance, I verily believe, had I been *d'accord*, he would not now have been a rigid observer of those *solemn oaths*, which had given him so much pain at Cave.

Upon my still persisting in going, he hinted at the report relative to Mr. Woodward, which, I own, displeased me much; for it could not really be supposed, that a person of that gentleman's age and prudence, especially as he had lost a fortune, and was endeavouring to save another, would marry a woman, even if she were inclinable, who was so much involved as myself, and was not the best economist in the world. Whether Sir George affected to believe the report, in order to serve as a plea for his not fulfilling the repeated promises he had made me, or whether he was really jealous, I will not pretend to determine; but such a coolness immediately took place, that I never saw him from this time till within these last seven years, when he called upon me to render me some assistance.

I have often regretted, that a man and woman cannot live in that unimpassioned friendship with each other, which subsists between two persons of the same sex, without being suspected by the world of a connection of a more tender nature, and acquiring censure thereby. I scarcely ever knew an instance, except in the intimacy between the amiable Jemmy Moor, whose untimely fate I have recorded, and myself, which lasted unchangeable, and *unreproached*, till death severed the band of friendship which united us.

I hope my sex will excuse the declaration, but I freely acknowledge, that I generally prefer the conversation of the men to that of females. The topics of the latter usually turn upon fashions or scandal, both of which I am now a stranger to. Scandal in particular I have always held in the highest detestation, and I have made it the subject of my reprehension in one of my preceding letters. Though I am now confined to a plain coif, I shall ever retain

retain the same contempt for that hypocrisy, which this part of the female attire too often covers. On the contrary, I have every reason to admire sincerity; for, by walking hand in hand with that celestial visitor, it has procured for me the friendship of many persons of the best understanding, as well as the best hearts.

As I shall have occasion to mention Mr. Woodward frequently in my subsequent letters, I shall endeavour to draw a portrait of him in *private* life. His merit as an actor was so universally known, and justly admired, as to render all eulogiums on that head unnecessary. He was educated at Merchant-Taylor's school, where he soon attracted the notice of the masters, by the rapid progress he made in his studies. I have often heard Sir George Hay, as well as Dr. Townley, the late master, say that he excited the surprise of every one, for he seemed to learn by intuition.

He early shewed an attachment to the stage, and his father meeting with misfortunes, he was induced to try the advantage of the talents with which nature had endow'd him, in the theatrical line, in preference to the church, for which he was intended. As his figure was elegant, it procured him the admiration of some of the gay frail ones, which occasioned him to spend several years in dissipation. This was the more extraordinary, as he was naturally of a grave turn of mind. He was, indeed, so much so, that to those who were not intimate with him, it had the appearance of ill-natured austerity.

I have already informed you, that he had a strong understanding, improved by cultivation. His knowledge was extensive, without any alloy of pedantry; but he never made an ostentatious display of it. He was a most entertaining companion when he approved of his company, but reserved in the extreme when he did not. He well knew the value of money; but few were more ready, when a proper occasion offered, to do a generous action. He was the most *principled* man I ever was acquainted with; and he gave me the following proof of his being so.

Mr. Woodward was once in a theatre, when a poor man, who had been in the habit of attending the school, and who was now a beggar, came in and begged of him. Mr. Woodward, who was then in the habit of attending the school, and who was now a beggar, came in and begged of him.



Mr. Lewis one day reproached him, at the theatre, with his appearing at rehearsal in a coat a little out at the elbows. This he imputed to pride, as he said he would not have done so but from a consciousness of his opulence. When Mr. Woodward repeated the circumstance to me, I enquired why he gave Mr. Lewis occasion for such a remark, by appearing in so worn a coat? To which he very seriously and *significantly* replied, "Madam, I cannot afford to run in debt." I cannot say but I felt very forcibly the justice of this reproach; and as persons are generally displeased when they feel themselves *stung* by a frank remembrancer, I was not in good humour, for some time, with my monitor.

Whilst he was under age, he entered into an engagement to pay his father's debts; but notwithstanding he might have availed himself of that circumstance, he discharged the whole of them with great honour. He set his brother up in business twice; and was one of the best of sons to his mother, with whom he resided till his unfortunate Irish expedition.—I have thus given you the outlines of his character. To enumerate his virtues, and to place them in the conspicuous light they merit, lies not within the reach of my feeble pen. Let me add, that I am of opinion his gravity, which was frequently misconstrued into pride, was occasioned by a bodily complaint he laboured under more than twenty years, and which was the cause of his death. I have been credibly informed, that had not a blameable delicacy prevented him from making Mr. Bromfield (a gentleman of whose surgical abilities he had the highest opinion) acquainted with his disorder, there would have been the greatest probability of his being restored to health, and he might have enjoyed an equal longevity with his contemporaries, Macklin and Yates. I have been led on to introduce the death of this great actor, and upright man, long before I ought to have done it; but the subject of his life was so interesting to me, that I could not break off whilst any thing remained to be said of it. I hope it will not prove unacceptable to those who admired his theatrical talents, to find that his memory has likewise a claim to veneration upon account of his private

private virtues. I may, indeed, most truly say with Hamlet, "Take him for all in all," combining all his claims to respect, "we shall not look upon his like again." As I know you participate in every circumstance that concerns me, I am persuaded you will read with pleasure this just, but inadequate tribute to the worthiest of men, who was at once, my patron, father, friend. Suspicious minds may perhaps annex another term to these; to such I shall only say, that had I been at that time inclined to enter into a tender connection, I had many solicitations from those who would have supported me in a very high line. People judge in general from appearances; and if those concerned do not think it worth while to explain these appearances, they always receive an unfavourable interpretation. Any further explanation of the nature of the union which afterwards took place between this gentleman and myself will be unnecessary, as it might be collected from many passages in the preceding part of this letter.

At the conclusion of the season, I had permission from his excellency Comte Hasting, to make a tour to the continent. His former housekeeper, who was now become Lady Paramount, had a house at Paddington, which induced his Lordship to prefer dining at the club, and, in the evening, to join his *intime*, Lord Falmouth, at Vauxhall, where the amusement of these two noblemen consisted in entertaining ladies of a particular denomination.

Nothing happened during this excursion worth relating. Upon my return, my mother's house being let to a family of the first quality, I took apartments in Rider-street, St. James's; and as I was now at liberty to have Miss Wordley with me, I requested her company. I have already, I think, informed you, that this young woman, before she was stage-struck, lived in the Earl of Powys's house, and was educated by her father, who was a profound scholar and divine, and endowed with a sound understanding.

As this daughter seemed to be the only one out of the three that had the happiness of enjoying the gifts of nature

ture in a similar manner with himself, Mr. Wordley had taken uncommon pains to cultivate the seeds so visible in her infant mind; and the culture was not bestowed in vain. She joined to a brilliant wit, the greatest humanity and the best of hearts. This naturally endeared her to me, and though by reason of her marriage, and her being the celebrated Quaker preacher, I am now deprived of her company, yet I am happy, when she calls upon me, to see that she retains her usual cheerfulness; and I cannot help regretting those days of entertainment and innocent mirth, which we have so often enjoyed together.

About this period an application was made to me by Mr. Woodfield, to pay a considerable sum for some red champagne, which, by Mrs. Calcraft's desire, I had ordered from him to send to Lord Granby in Germany; and I had another demand from Fimmore, of the Star and Garter tavern, for claret, which I had likewise indiscreetly wrote an order for Calcraft, when I resided in Parliament-street. As I could not think myself liable to these demands, I took no manner of notice of them; the consequence of which was, that they both commenced actions against me.

Accordingly, as I was preparing one night for the opera, I was honoured with a visit from two of the catchpole fraternity, who told me I must take the air with them, before I indulged my ears. The debt I had contracted of Woodfield, on Lord Granby's account, I could by no means litigate. His Lordship was abroad, and I was too much indebted to his generosity to think of writing to him upon such a subject.

When I arrived at the officer's house, the man seeing me better dressed than his visitors usually were, and recollecting my voice, he took my word for my settling Mr. Woodfield's action the next day; and giving bail for the other, which I was determined to contest, in order at once to expose Mr. Calcraft, and try the validity of my protection. For though I did not lodge in the Ambassador's house, I was actually his house-keeper, and remained upon the list till the Comte's death. But I only availed myself of his protection once. Whilst this affair



was in agitation I sent for Mr. Willis, Mr. Calcraft's clerk, to whom I remonstrated upon this fresh instance of his master's ill treatment, but could obtain no redress. My letter to Mr. Calcraft will, however, elucidate these mean and ungentleman-like transactions.

I was obliged, by this unexpected event, to have recourse, once more, to the friendship of Mr. Hearne, who immediately assisted me. This last sum, accumulated that gentleman's debt to six hundred and forty pounds; for, besides the different sums I had borrowed of him, he had redeemed some valuables which I had left with Mr. Maclewain, of Dublin, in order to discharge every demand upon me when last I was in that kingdom.

Among these things was a gold enamelled snuff-box, a gift of the beautiful Countess of Kildare, (since Duchess of Leinster) and as such was esteemed invaluable by me. This I own was the only piece of elegance I ever feverishly regretted parting with; nor should I ever have parted with it, had there not been almost a certainty of my having so valuable a mark of her Ladyship's partiality restored to me. This deposit, together with three or four dividends, and some tickets at my bank, are all I have been able to pay of this large debt; and inexpressibly happy shall I be, if ever it is in my power to discharge it. In the mean time, I shall retain the most lively gratitude for such frequent interpositions in my favour.

The being too sanguine in my hopes has led me into many difficulties; but the indulgence of these expectations, originated from my having been so supremely fortunate as to meet with such singular friends as the Miss Merediths, Miss St. Leger, Miss Conway, Lady Tyrrawley and Mrs. Cracroft, as well as Mr. Woodworth, whose former passion was now mellowed into friendship. I have, however, had the mortification to outlive them all.

Female friendship never becomes the subject of my pen, or of my conversation; but that most beautiful description given of it by Shakespeare, in his "Midsummer-Night's

"Night's Dream," immediately occurs to my memory, and raises in my mind the most pleasing sensations. As it is not inapplicable here, the mutual affection which subsisted between the foregoing ladies and myself, being of the purest and most exalted kind, I will transcribe for you the lines.

"Is all the counsel that we two have shared;  
 "The sister vows, the hours that we have spent;  
 "When we have chid the hasty-footed time  
 "For parting us! O! and is all forgot?  
 "All school-days friendship, childhood innocence?  
 "We, Hermia, like two artificial gods,  
 "Created with our needles both one flower;  
 "Both on one sampler, sitting on one cushion;  
 "Both warbling of one song, both in one key;  
 "As if our hands, our sides, voices, and minds,  
 "Had been incorporate. So we grew together,  
 "Like to a double cherry, seeming parted,  
 "But yet an union in partition;  
 "Two lovely berries moulded on one stem;  
 "So with two seeming bodies, but one heart;  
 "Two of the first, like coats in heraldry,  
 "Due but to one, and crowned with one crest."

# LETTER LXXXHI.

October 8, 17—

To this period Mrs. Cracroft died, which gave me a real pain, as we were for years in the strictest friendship. This excellent woman was greatly regretted by all who were acquainted with her eminent virtues. She possessed the most enchanting placidity of disposition, joined to the most liberal sentiments; and notwithstanding she was a miracle of chastity herself, she felt compassion for the frailties of her sex. Nor did she think herself contaminated by an intimacy with a much-injured wo-

\* Act III. Scene VII.

man,

man, that she knew had been grossly imposed upon, and most wickedly traduced.

Permit me just to say, upon this occasion, (for, if I recollect aright, I have touched upon the subject in a former letter) I have always observed that the really virtuous of our sex, ever view with compassion the errors of those who have been seduced by the artifices of designing men; and, though totally unacquainted themselves with the frailties of human nature, in this point, can bestow a year of pity on the martyr of an unguarded moment.—Chastity is undoubtedly the brightest ornament that adorns the female mind. I agree with Diana, when she says,

“My chastity’s the jewel of our house,

“Bequeathed down from many ancestors;

“Which were the greatest obloquy th’ world

“In me to lose.”

But I can by no means allow, as the censorious part of the sex seem to consider it, that this virtue is the only needful one; and when a person has been unhappily deprived of it, though by the most seductive arts, every other good qualification takes its flight with it.

Lady Tyravley’s health visibly declining, I became very apprehensive that her loss would soon succeed that of my much regretted friend just mentioned. Few evenings passed, without my receiving a summons to Somerset-house. Her Ladyship, however, remained in this situation for three or four years.

As soon as the theatre shut up, I again visited the confidante. I had there the pleasure of hearing, that Madam Brilliant, the French actress I have frequently mentioned, had retired from the gay scene of life she had been so long engaged in, to the gloom of a convent. Though still esteemed in her theatrical profession, and with an extensive train of admirers, among whom was one of the first Dukes in that kingdom, she resisted all their solicitations, and notwithstanding she had been so unfortunate as to lose her reputation, she had the resolution to prefer fasting.

Act III. Scene VII.

• All’s well that ends well, Act IV. Scene II.

and



and a braviary, to all the elegance and splendor of Paris. This, in my idea, is *real virtue*; especially as she had forfeited the opinion of the world. But she is amply repaid for every worldly loss, by that happy tranquillity she now, if she still be living, enjoys.

My going abroad this year was occasioned by the following circumstance. One of my creditors promised that he would sign my letter of licence, if I would pay him thirty guineas, and he gave me assurance in writing of his doing so; notwithstanding which, the very evening of the day I had paid the money on, he served me with a copy of a writ for the remainder. Exasperated at such ungenerous treatment, I gave bail, and determined to stand trial. Upon this occasion Mr. Woodward recommended Mr. Zachary Stephens, solicitor in Chancery-lane, to me, to carry on the suit. He undertook the cause, but through some neglect as the officer declared (either of his not being served with a proper notice, or his not serving one,) judgment was suffered to go against me, by what is termed default.

Distracted at the supposition of my bail's suffering upon my account, and apprehensive for my own liberty, I went, in order to accept the offered friendship of Mrs. Collier, who had settled in France, to avoid the persecution and extravagance of one of the worst of husbands. That lady immediately lent me the sum I required, and took my note payable in a year. At her house I renewed my former acquaintance with the beautiful Miss A——, who was sent abroad upon account of her having formed an imprudent partiality for a celebrated singer. I should not have mentioned this circumstance, but as it led to a very disagreeable one many years after.

Indeed, my life has been productive of so many untoward, and almost incredible events, that were there not many persons still living who can bear witness to the authenticity of them, I should be ashamed to relate them, as they must appear rather the memoirs of a *female Crusoe*, than a relation of facts. Such, however, should curiosity lead to enquiries, they will be found to be.

Upon

sense forgetting it was Sunday, had placed herself in the window, and sat very composedly *at work*. So unusual a sight drew the attention of those who passed, and soon raised a crowd before the inn. My son and his companions happening to ride through the village, at the same time, to their return, their notice was likewise attracted by the novelty. This gave Miss Wordley an opportunity of seeing my youngster, whom she immediately knew by the great resemblance he bore to his father. Upon which, being above all ceremony, and her apprehensions of a favourable reception being removed by the sight of the chaise, she threw up the window, made herself known to the young gentlemen, and being seated in the chaise, was conducted by four squires on horseback, *en grand train*, to join us.

After tea, my host desired he might have the pleasure of shewing me to my apartment, as he had something particular to say to me. I arose and followed him. When we got into my room, I was not a little surprized to see him assume an air of consequence, which no one knew better than himself how to do. He then, with a grave countenance, said, that he was very much concerned to tell me, he had something very disagreeable to inform me of. I began to fear, from this exordium, that I had been too hasty in sending away the chaise. But my apprehensions soon vanished, when he told me, with great solemnity, that during the distraction occasioned by our separation, he had rashly bound himself, by the most sacred vows, never more to have any tender connection with me.

The conclusion of this speech had such an effect upon me, that I was in danger of forgetting the grace, so far as to burst into a fit of laughter. But recollecting myself as well as I could, I begged he would not be under the confusion of an apology; for could I have supposed, that in the present situation of things it would have been otherwise, I certainly should not have accepted his invitation. I perceived that his vanity was much hurt at this declaration, and was concerned at it. He had not supposed that I should receive a circumstance of such great import with the unaffected indifference I did. He expected

that

that I should regret the restriction, with the same poignant feelings he had declared he himself felt; and his chagrin upon the occasion was visible. However, upon rejoining the company, he re-assumed his good humour and politeness. In both these, Sir George exceeded the generality of his sex, particularly in the latter. I cannot recollect a person amongst all my acquaintance, except the Dowager Lady Harrington, who knew how to acquit themselves in doing the honours of their house, with more ease and attention. An indisputable proof of a good heart, improved by a polite education.

G. A. B.

## LETTER LXXX.

WHILST I continued at Cave, every body seemed to vie with each other which could most succeed in pleasing me. But my anxiety to procure an engagement at the theatre, made me at times very uneasy. Such a step was absolutely necessary, to clear me from the debts with which I was encumbered; for notwithstanding the sums I had paid, I still owed above four thousand pounds. Sir George expressed to me a desire of selling an estate, in order to extricate both himself and me, which he assured me he would do, as soon as it was in his power, and he gave me a commission to speak to Alderman Cracroft, upon my return to London, to look out for a purchaser.

In the mean time, he wrote to his cousin, Lord Eglington, desiring he would use his interest with Mr. Beard, the then acting manager, in order to replace me in my former station at Covent-Garden theatre. By his lordship's answer, I had the mortification to find, that the proprietors were desirous of saving so heavy a salary as mine. Mrs. Ward and Miss Macklin, had divided between them the characters which used to be in my possession. His lordship was therefore informed, that there was no room for me. My pride, as well as the prudential motives which made me solicitous for an engagement, tended to aggravate the contents of his lordship's letter, and



and to render the disappointment the more irksome! So that notwithstanding the unremitting attention which was shewn me at Cave, as the winter was now advanced, I determined to visit London.

Accordingly, Miss Wordley, my son, and little self, set off for the great city; after having spent three months in all the pleasure that agreeable society, good cheer, good humour, and unembittered pleasantries can afford, I left this seat of hospitality with regret; which would have been greatly augmented, could I have then foreseen that I should never more have been an inhabitant of it.

I could not refrain from shedding tears, as we passed the residence of my late worthy friend, Lord Downe. And when I recollected the manner of this nobleman's death, and that no public honours have been ever paid to his memory, a gloom overcasts my mind, and I pay him the tribute of a sigh.

At Stamford, I was most agreeably surprised to meet with Lord Granby, who did me the honour to spend the evening with me. I could not help observing, to my great surprise, that during the whole time we were together, his lordship never mentioned the name of Mr. Calcraft. This was the more singular, from a report which was then current, and which I shall explain more fully in my annexed letter to that gentleman, that Sir George had promised to allow me seven guineas a week; and he assured me that he would soon be in town. The commission he empowered me to give to Mr. Alderman Calcraft, afforded me double pleasure; as, independent of my own expectations from it, I should be enabled by it to shew my gratitude to one of the best of men. I own the satisfaction I received, from finding myself thus reconciled to the person on whom I first bestowed my heart, was very great. A series of the most complicated treachery had induced me to use him ill, at the very time I preferred him to his whole sex; and the assurance of his future friendship was flattering in the extreme. Whilst it promised to be serviceable to me, it did me honour. The lines I have already quoted from Shakespeare's *Midsummer Night's Dream*, relative to the

the crosses of love, are full as applicable to this disunion, as to that where I applied them. I might here, also, with as much propriety say, "the course of true love never did run smooth."

Upon our arrival in London, we were set down at my mother's in Brewer-street, whose house, very fortunately, happened to be empty. I have already observed, that she usually let it to persons of distinction; the profits of which, added to the interest of the money she had saved, together with her pension, enabled her to live genteelly, and keep up an acquaintance with those who were greatly her superiors.

She consented to let me have her first floor, and undertook to pay all my incidental expences with the money Sir George Metham had promised to allow me. But as she knew the suspiciousness of his disposition, (which indeed turned out as she expected) and the precariousness of making an engagement at the theatres, when both the companies were settled, she objected to Miss Wordley's continuing with me. Though this objection was the result of prudence, it gave me infinite pain. However, as taking up my abode in a parent's house, must appear more eligible in the eyes of the world, than in any other lodging I could get, I was obliged to consent, though with great reluctance, to that young lady's settling near me.

Soon after my return from Scotland, Mr. Doddsley sent me a receipt for a considerable sum which I stood indebted to him for books. I accepted it as a genteel compliment, for having been the successful heroine of his brother's tragedy of Cleone.

I then wrote to Mr. Digges, (I should say, Mr. West) to acquaint him that we must never meet again. As I had nothing to reproach him with, I did not trouble him with any upbraidings. He had not been guilty of any deception towards me; and, barring his unhappy jealous temper, I must acknowledge that he strove, by every tender, indulgent attention, to please me. Nor did we ever meet after, but once in the street, and twice at the theatre. A circumstance happened the night of our arrival in town, which, though rising in itself, as it shewed my

much

much-loved son's affection, I cannot forbear relating. When lights were brought, observing they were of tallow, without seeming to take any manner of notice, he immediately went out and purchased wax. Having done this, his delicacy induced him to call me, upon some slight pretence, into another room, whilst they were changed. Such a mark of attention and respect, could not fail of giving the most heart-felt pleasure to a fond mother. And I have the satisfaction to pay this just tribute to his beloved memory, (for he is now no more) that to the day of his death, he preserved the same unremitting affection and assiduity to please me. The next day I took him to Eton, as he had greatly trespassed upon the limits of his holidays.

Upon my return I visited Mark-lane, to consult my good friend the Alderman; when I opened my commission, which he gladly undertook. I had always, even in my most encumbered situation, preserved my credit with him. Being himself the most punctual of men in all his dealings, he never excused the want of punctuality in others. He, however, usually gave his clients permission to name their own time of payment; but that he expected them to abide by. The alderman had paid my creditors such considerable sums the year of my unfortunate expatriating, that he not only kept them in good humour, but prevailed upon them all, (except the one who had so cruelly persecuted me) to promise that they would do every thing in their power to serve me.

I had entered the room upon my first going in, with my usual cheerfulness; and announced myself, by saying, "Here I am." Mrs. Cracroft received me with her usual affection. Mr. Cracroft then asked me if I had any hopes of an engagement? To which I replied in the negative. But I told him what Sir George had promised to do for me; at which he was much pleased. And as the estate, intended to be sold, was in a registered county, he had no doubt, he said, but he should be able to dispose of it to advantage. I next acquainted him, that I should endeavour to procure an engagement, if it was only for a few nights, in order to be entitled to a benefit, which I had every reason to hope would prove as lucrative.



tive as usual. I therefore requested that he would get my letter of licence renewed; and likewise raise money upon the plate which I had left in his hands, at once to pay himself what would be due to him in a few days, (for he was to be paid his debt at stated periods) and to support me till Sir George came to town; as I could not hope to receive any supply from that gentleman, till the estate was sold.

During my return home, a thought struck me, which was to write to the honourable Mr. James Brudenell, now Lord Brudenell, who had formerly honoured me with his friendship; but since my separation from his intimate acquaintance, Sir George Metham, had desisted from noticing me. As I was in hopes that his coolness would subside, now the cause of it was removed, by my reconciliation with the man he so greatly esteemed, I presumed by letter to solicit the honour of his interest with the proprietors of the theatre. Should I be so happy as to succeed in obtaining this request, I could not then, I knew, entertain the least doubt of an engagement; it being the *distinguished* mark of character in that truly noble family, whenever they espouse a cause, to make use of every means in their power to promote it. Would some of high rank that I could name, follow such bright examples, we should not so frequently hear of broken promises.

The observance of a promise is held by me in so sacred a light, that I cannot forbear expatiating upon it whenever opportunity offers. I shall, therefore, just remark, by way of addition to what I have said upon the subject in a former letter, that my feelings, when I have been obliged to postpone the performance of a verbal engagement, through the want of ability to accomplish my wishes, are pungent in the extreme. I am even of opinion, that an injury received, will by no means cancel an obligation of this nature, or warrant a breach of it. And so far is my attention engaged by anxiety for the fulfilment of those I have entered into, that there is one in particular, which will be a constant source of disquietude to me till it is in my power to discharge it.

The morning after, I was honoured with a visit from the gentleman I had wrote to; when he not only promised to exert his interest in my favour, but made me happy, by assuring me of the renewed patronage of the ladies of his family.

Two mornings after this, I happened to lie in bed longer than usual. Although I can rise at any hour, with the greatest alertness, when any concern, whether of business or pleasure calls me; yet when that is not the case, you know I am no *Matinée*. Being thus indolently inclined, Miss Wordley came running into my bed-chamber, and with joy impressed on her countenance, desired I would make haste and rise, as Johany Beard was coming to see me.

I imagined Miss Wordley meant Mr. Baird from Glasgow, a gentleman who had been a warm partisan of mine, whilst I was in that city. I could not entertain the most distant idea, that the manager of Covent Garden theatre would so far lessen his consequence, as to visit a performer whom he had so recently rejected; alledging, as he had done to Lord Eglington, that musical pieces were the staple commodity of that house. I found it, however, to my great surprise, to be the patentee himself. Having saluted me, with his usual cordial civility, he informed me, laughing, that he was come ambassador from the junto, and had the happiness to be deputed by them to engage me; adding, that there was a necessity for the engagement's being signed that very evening. Upon my expressing my astonishment at the celerity required, and the urgency made use of, he acquainted me, that he had been honoured with a visit from Colonel Brudenell, who had peremptorily demanded, that I should be engaged in four and twenty hours, or else he should be obliged to compel them to a compliance. As the resolution of this gentleman was well known, and, likewise, that he was distinguished by having the ear of royalty, the proprietors thought it better to comply with his demand, than to risk incurring the displeasure of a person whose favour was of such importance to them.

As a further consideration, they knew he had great influence over all the young men of quality, many of whom

would be happy in having an opportunity of breaking chandeliers, and pulling up benches.

It must be supposed that I was not a little mortified, when I considered that a performer, who had always been esteemed of consequence, and who had every reason to conclude herself in some estimation with the public, should, according to the stage phrase, be forced upon the managers. I was, however, consoled by the reflection, that I was still honoured with the friendship of my worthy benefactor Mr. Brudenell, who had induced his brother the Colonel, to espouse my cause so warmly.

I immediately sent my good friend, Alderman Cracroft, intelligence of this unexpected success. He was much pleased to hear of it; but, acquainted me at the same time, of his having been informed, that my inexorable prosecutrix had bought up two notes of mine, in order to make her debt above a thousand pounds, by which she intended to prevent me from taking the benefit of any act of insolvency. And this she had done, notwithstanding I had regularly paid her the stipulated two hundred pounds a year, and had given a proof of my honest intentions, by scorning even a thought of taking advantage of an act, at the time I owed near twice the sum I now did. He therefore advised me by all means to apply to Comte Haslang, with whom I had formerly had the honour to be upon the most friendly terms, to request that he would retain me for his house-keeper, as a security for my person.

The application was no sooner made, than granted, and my protection was drawn up nearly in these words:

"WHEREAS George Anne Bellamy, my house-keeper, informs me, that she has contracted some debts which she is anxious to pay; and as she is offered an engagement at Covent-Garden theatre, I grant her my leave to perform at the said theatre, upon this condition only, that she appropriates her *whole* salary for the use of her creditors.

"Signed,

"De Haslang"

The



The next day, my engagement at Covent Garden theatre was publicly announced in the papers, together with my intended appearance, the Friday following, in the character of Cleone.

I had now obtained the summit of my present hopes; and as I know your feelings are set in unison with my own, I dare say you will enjoy with me this momentary respite of mine from trouble. A momentary respite I call it. For as Elodia says, upon reading Abelard's Letters "When ever thy name I find, some sore misfortune follows close behind;" so, with me, fresh troubles tread upon the heels of a relaxation from pain; as the hurricanes in the West Indies, and other countries subject to them, are surely preceded by a dead calm.

### LETTER LXXXI.

Now imagined my person to be secure, and that all my affairs were settled, except that of my obdurate female creditor; and even her I had now no apprehensions from, as I concluded she would take the yearly sum she had agreed to do, rather than attempt breaking through the laws of nations by attacking a person, who was actually the known domestic of a foreign minister; and as I was certain that I should be able to pay her the stipulated sum, from the produce of my benefit, as it was not due till the April following, I set my heart at rest upon that score. I was likewise perfectly happy, that notwithstanding my sudden decampment in the middle of the season, I had nothing to apprehend from the loss of the public favour; as the very morning the play I was to appear in was advertised, every place in the house was taken.

But to my very great mortification, I found the tranquillity which I had assumed to be fallacious; and the serene prospect that seemed to present itself, as unsubstantial as the baseless fabric of a dream. The house-keeper who lived with me during my abode in Jermyn-street, and in whom I had wholly confided, had appropriated

prised the money allowed for the expences of the house to her own use; and by bringing me in false vouchers, made me believe every thing was paid for; by which means, I found myself two hundred pounds more in debt than I thought for. With the money thus fraudulently obtained, she had purchased herself a husband, whom she accompanied to Switzerland, his native country.

This occasioned me many unwelcome visitors, and obliged me to be troublesome once more, to my good friend Mr. Hearne, who lent me the money, and I discharged all their bills. I now concluded I was exonerated from all claims that could be made upon me, but I was still deceived. Upon the renewal of my letter of licence, I had sent it to Mr. Deard, to whom I owed about seventeen pounds, for him to sign. I did this as a mere matter of form; for as I had expended large sums with his father as well as himself, I had no apprehensions about such a trifle.

But instead of signing it, Mr. Deard sent me word he would call upon me. This he did, on the morning of the day I was once more to exhibit myself to the public. He was informed that I was engaged, and could not see him. But as he was very pressing, and had formerly been very obliging in lending me diamonds, I naturally imagined his business was something of the same purport. No words, however, can express my fright and astonishment, when he informed me, that he had a demand upon me for one hundred and odd pounds, for a pair of ear-rings he had lent me, and which he told me had been pledged at Mr. Watson's, in Prince's-street, Leicester-fields.

Had the snakey head of Medusa been presented to my view, I could not have been more petrified than I was at receiving this information. The pair of ear-rings had been lent me before I left London; and when I had no longer any occasion for them, I returned them by a person I thought I could entrust; but I now found she had been dishonest enough to pawn them. Mr. Deard told me, that he was sensible I knew nothing of the affair; but that did not exonerate me from being accountable for them. Had I returned them myself, as I certainly ought

to have done, it would have prevented this disagreeable transaction.

What made this circumstance the more singular was, that I had sent the letter of licence, when it was first drawn, to Mr. Deard, and he had signed it for the sum before mentioned. The unhappy wretch, who committed this breach of trust, was in possession of a fortune at the time she did it, and had paid the debt of nature only a few months before I was made acquainted with her dishonesty. She had before borrowed a watch of mine, set with diamonds, which she had also pledged, but in compassion to her youth and family, I did not proceed to extremities.

There was no resource now left, but to pay the money. For this purpose I sent once more to Mr. Hearn. That worthy man came immediately, and settled the affair; but not without reproaching Mr. Deard, in the severest terms, for deferring to inform me of this untoward transaction till the day appointed for my appearance, which he well knew must be a very improper time to discompose my mind. He told me, as my being in Scotland was no secret, he ought to have wrote to me there, that I might have had the earliest information possible of an affair which so nearly concerned me. As Mr. Hearn had formerly paid his father and him large sums of money upon my account, this reprehension came with double efficacy from his lips.

Mr. Deard apologized for the omission, by alledging, that as he knew me to be quite innocent of the affair, he feared the knowledge of it would have affected me too much at such a distance; and as he knew my principle, he had not entertained the least doubt of receiving the money upon my return to town. This unlucky accident disconcerted me greatly; but I was really angry at an offer of more diamonds, which he had brought with him, to decorate me. After what had passed, I rejected them with some asperity; and I then formed a resolution of never borrowing any jewels in future, but of Lady Tyrawley, which I considered as my own; her Ladyship having frequently declared, that she had willed all those she possessed to me, upon her demise.

The



The apprehensions naturally attendant on a first appearance, can be judged of only by a performer. And this is greatly heightened, where there is an anxiety to preserve reputation in a profession which has been very hardly acquired. The ill-judged visit of Mr. Deard, made no inconsiderable addition to the perturbations I experienced upon this occasion. They were, however, soon removed by the incessant plaudits I received from every part of the house. But encouraging as these were, they did not gratify my feelings so much, as the splendid appearance, of most of my former patronesses. Among them I saw with pleasure, all the ladies belonging to the family of the gentleman that had procured my engagement. The managers, encouraged by the reiterated marks of approbation which were bestowed upon me, at the conclusion of the piece, very *injudiciously* gave it out for the next evening. They did not consider that this was an opera night, and consequently so great a show of beauty was not to be expected to grace the boxes. Besides, the author being now dead, as well as most of his friends and supporters, and the distress being so very deep that few persons could stand the effects of it, the piece was not at this time held in so high estimation as it once was. It consequently did not succeed the second night, though played after in the course of the winter.

But I must observe, that the managers have it always in their power to depress a performer, even if possessed of much greater merit than ever I could boast; and I am well persuaded, that if the greatest actor that ever was, and, in my humble opinion, ever will be, had not had *the management of himself*, the choice of his characters, and the timing of the representations, he would not have retained the estimation he so justly deserved, and carried with him to the grave. The truth of the foregoing assertion will be more fully proved, by his treatment of the two first female performers that ever trod the stage, the deservedly celebrated Cibber, and Clive.

Miss Elliot, a very beautiful young woman, and who had great talents, had got possession of all my parts in comedy, except Lady Townley, Juliet, and two or three others were restored me by Miss Macklin; but I had not much

much employment at the theatre. This, however, did not give me so great concern as it would have done formerly; for my attendance at his Excellency Comte Hasting's, engrossed every day a considerable part of my time.

Mr. Beard informed me, one evening, that "Coriolanus" was commanded for the following Thursday. I immediately pointed out to him, the impracticability of my recovering such a part as Verrina in a day. He answered me very short, that I must positively play it, as I had been expressly named; and, consequently, it must be so. So flattering a distinction could not fail of affording me the greatest pleasure, and exciting my utmost emulation. But the very anxiety which urged me to exert, made me the more imperfect; and I had the mortification to feel, that I never played so ill in my life. This failure was greatly exaggerated, by being contrasted with the success I had usually met with in this character. It had always been esteemed one of those in which I most shone. Indeed, to speak the truth, I verily believe, that no performer, entitled to the least merit, could so completely have massacred a Roman matron, as I unfortunately did that night.

My second mortification was relative to Lady Townley. As I had always gained great reputation in that character, had it been properly announced, there was every reason to conclude that the audience would have been brilliant; but being only substituted in the place of an opera, upon the indisposition of a singing performer, it was consequently represented to a very indifferent house. Mr. Woodward had at this period dissolved the partnership, which he had very judiciously entered into with Barry. This gentleman, as I have already observed, had accumulated, by his uncommon talents, and his economy, the sum of eleven thousand pounds. Upon his having some dispute with the great Roscius, who, it is well known, could bear no brother near the throne, he went to Ireland, as before related; where, after four years labour and vexation, he found himself stripped of every guinea he had been possessed of, besides being involved in the joint debts. He had therefore commenced a suit

a suit in Chancery against his late partner, and returned to England.

The subsequent winter he engaged at Covent-Garden, where his success was attended with great advantage to the proprietors. This excellent actor, was known in the theatre to have formerly been my professed admirer. On the attention he now seemed to pay me, was therefore immediately set down to the same account. Miss Elliot's ill health obliging her often to decline playing, all the characters I had once possessed now reverted to their owner, which occasioned Mr. Woodward and myself, to appear generally in the same pieces.

Unfortunately for me, a disagreement subsisted between him and the manager, although they had formerly lived in the strictest intimacy. Mr. Woodward's seeming partiality towards me, consequently involved me in Mr. Beard's displeasure. Another circumstance tended to augment this unmerited impression. The manager had lately married Mr. Rich's daughter, with whom, as I have informed you, I was some years back so intimate. This lady, however, having indiscreetly repeated some conversation which passed at Mr. Calcraft's table, he desired I would decline receiving her visits. A great coolness was the result, and we never after were upon friendly terms. I can account no other way for this alteration in the behaviour of the manager, which had always been cordial till that event took place.

Sir George Metham at length came to town; and, soon after his arrival, he desired I would invite Mr. Alderman Cracroft and Mr. Forrest to dinner, in order to settle the preliminary steps towards the disposal of the estate he proposed to sell. He, upon this occasion, repeated the promise he had made me, when at Cave, of discharging all my debts, as soon as he received the purchase money. But ill-fortune was still to pursue me. Mr. Cracroft was not able, among all his connections, to get any one to purchase the estate at the price set upon it. The hopes I had indulged, and with so good a prospect of their completion, were consequently frustrated; for a coolness soon after took place, which obliterated all these professions;

blueo I mid blot I gnuave odi yall of dounm em belland



and the money I expected, went to purchase an annuity for a lady he afterwards formed a connection with.

When my benefit came to be fixed, the manager and myself had some words relative to Miss Wordley's performing on the occasion. That young lady wished to try her fortune upon the London stage, and I desired much to indulge her, as I was at this time so attached to her, that I feared she would be obliged to enter into some country company, or go to Ireland, if she could not get an engagement in town. The play performed on my night, was "Romeo and Juliet;" and the after-piece was, "Miss in her Teens;" in which she was to make her *entrée* on Tag.

I succeeded in carrying my point as to the introduction of my friend; and the receipt was the greatest that had ever been known. My great gold tickets, however, failed; for I received but one hundred from Lord Holdernesse, fifty a-piece from General Monkton, Lord Granby, and Lord Pigot; and one fifty in a blank cover, which I have often suspected came from Mr. Woodward.

My friend, however, having been introduced, she performed with great success.

LETTER LXXXII.  
September 30, 1771.

THE day after, Sir George Metham sent to inform me that my son was much indisposed, and requested me to come to Palace-yard. Having a visitant with me, that was just come from Scotland, I could not obey the summons till after dinner. I then went, with a promise of returning as soon as possible; having been informed by the servant, who brought the message, that my dear George had only a slight cold.

When I arrived, I found Mr. Macklin *à table* with Sir George; who had informed the baronet that I was going to be married to Mr. Woodward. The absurdity of such a report could only be laughed at, on its being mentioned to me; and answered with, "Yes, to be sure!" After the veteran was departed, Sir George pressed me much to stay the evening. I told him I could

not possibly comply with his request, as I had left company at home, to whom I had promised, and good manners obliged me to return. Notwithstanding this, forgetting his usual politeness, he entreated me again to stay; and, in spite of all his usual non-chalance, I verily believe, had I been *d'accord*, he would not now have been a rigid observer of those *solemn oaths*, which had given him so much pain at Cave.

Upon my still persisting in going, he hinted at the report relative to Mr. Woodward, which, I own, displeased me much; for it could not really be supposed, that a person of that gentleman's age and prudence, especially as he had lost a fortune, and was endeavouring to save another, would marry a woman, even if she were inclinable, who was so much involved as myself, and was not the best economist in the world. Whether Sir George affected to believe the report, in order to serve as a plea for his not fulfilling the repeated promises he had made me, or whether he was really jealous, I will not pretend to determine; but such a coolness immediately took place, that I never saw him from this time till within these last seven years, when he called upon me to render me some assistance.

I have often regretted, that a man and woman cannot live in that unpassioned friendship with each other, which subsists between two persons of the same sex, without being suspected by the world of a connection of a more tender nature, and acquiring censure thereby. I scarcely ever knew an instance, except in the intimacy between the amiable Jimmy Moor, whose untimely fate I have recorded, and myself, which lasted unchangeable, and *unreproached*, till death severed the band of friendship which united us.

I hope my sex will excuse the declaration, but I freely acknowledge, that I generally prefer the conversation of the men to that of females. The topics of the latter usually turn upon fashions or scandal, both of which I am now a stranger to. Scandal in particular I have always held in the highest detestation, and I have made it the subject of my reprehension in one of my preceding letters. Though I am now confined to a plain coat, I shall ever retain

retain the same contempt for that hypocrisy, which this part of the female attire too often covers. On the contrary, I have every reason to admire sincerity; for, by walking hand in hand with that celestial visitor, it has procured for me the friendship of many persons of the best understanding, as well as the best hearts.

As I shall have occasion to mention Mr. Woodward frequently in my subsequent letters, I shall endeavour to draw a portrait of him in *private* life. His merit as an actor was so universally known, and justly admired, as to render all eulogiums on that head unnecessary. He was educated at Merchant-Taylor's-school, where he soon attracted the notice of the masters, by the rapid progress he made in his studies. I have often heard Sir George Hay, as well as Dr. Townley, the late master, say, that he excited the surprize of every one, for he seemed to learn by intuition.

He early shewed an attachment to the stage; and his father meeting with misfortunes, he was induced to try the advantage of the talents with which nature had endowed him, in the theatrical line, in preference to the church, for which he was intended. As his figure was elegant, it procured him the admiration of some of the gay frail ones, which occasioned him to spend several years in dissipation. This was the more extraordinary, as he was naturally of a grave turn of mind. He was, indeed, so much so, that to those who were not intimate with him, it had the appearance of ill-natured austerity.

I have already informed you, that he had a strong understanding, improved by cultivation. His knowledge was extensive, without any alloy of pedantry; but he never made an ostentatious display of it. He was a most entertaining companion when he approved of his company, but reserved in the extreme when he did not. He well knew the value of money; but few were more ready, when a proper occasion offered, to do a generous action. He was the most *principled* man I ever was acquainted with; and he gave me the following proof of his being so.

Mr. I thought I am now confined to a plain coat.



Mr. Lewis one day reproached him, at the theatre, with his appearing at rehearsal in a coat a little out at the elbows. This he imputed to pride, as he said he would not have done so but from a consciousness of his opulence. When Mr. Woodward repeated the circumstance to me, I enquired why he gave Mr. Lewis occasion for such a remark, by appearing in so worn a coat. To which she very seriously and significantly replied, "Madam, I can not afford to run in debt." I cannot say but I felt very forcibly the justice of this reproach; and as persons are generally displeased when they feel themselves *stung* by a frank remembrancer, I was not in good humour, for some time, with my monitor.

Whilst he was under age, he entered into an engagement to pay his father's debts; but notwithstanding he might have availed himself of that circumstance, he discharged the whole of them with great honour. He set his brother up in business twice, and was one of the best of sons to his mother, with whom he resided till his unfortunate Irish expedition.—I have thus given you the outlines of his character. To enumerate his virtues, and to place them in the conspicuous light they merit, lies not within the reach of my feeble pen. I must add, that I am of opinion his gravity, which was frequently misconstrued into pride, was occasioned by a bodily complaint he laboured under more than twenty years, and which was the cause of his death. I have been credibly informed, that had not a blameable delicacy prevented him from making Mr. Bromfield (a gentleman of whose chirurgical abilities he had the highest opinion) acquainted with his disorder, there would have been the greatest probability of his being restored to health, and he might have enjoyed an equal longevity with his contemporaries, Macklin and Yates. I have been led on to introduce the death of this great actor, and upright man, long before I ought to have done so; but the subject of his life was so interesting to me, that I could not break off whilst any thing remained to be said of it. I hope it will not prove unacceptable to those who admired his theatrical talents, to find that his memory has likewise a claim to veneration upon account of his private

private virtues. I may, indeed, most truly say with Hamlet, "Take him for all in all," combining all his claims to respect, "we shall not look upon his like again."

As I know you participate in every circumstance that concerns me, and am persuaded you will read with pleasure this just, but inadequate tribute to the worthiest of men, who was at once, "my patron, father, friend." Suspicious minds may perhaps annex another term to these; to such I shall only say, that had I been at that time inclined to enter into a tender connection, I had many solicitations from those who would have supported me in a very high line. People judge in general from appearances; and if those concerned do not think it worth while to explain these appearances, they always receive an unfavourable interpretation. Any further explanation of the nature of the union which afterwards took place between this gentleman and myself will be unnecessary, as it might be collected from many passages in the preceding part of this letter.

At the conclusion of the season, I had permission from his excellency Comte Haslang, to make a tour to the continent. His former housekeeper, who was now become Lady Paramount, had a house at Paddington, which induced his Lordship to prefer dining at the club, and in the evening, to join his *intime*, Lord Palmouth, at Vauxhall, where the amusement of these two noble men consisted in entertaining ladies of a particular denomination.

Nothing happened during this excursion worth relating. Upon my return, my mother's house being let to a family of the first quality, I took apartments in Rider Street, St. James's; and as I was now at liberty to have Miss Wordley with me, I requested her company. I have already, I think, informed you, that this young woman, before she was stage-struck, lived in the Earl of Powys's house, and was educated by her father, who was a profound scholar and divine, and endowed with a sound understanding.

As this daughter seemed to be the only one out of the three that had the happiness of enjoying the gifts of nature

ture in a similar manner with himself, Mr. Wordley had taken uncommon pains to cultivate the seeds so visible in her infant mind; and the culture was not bestowed in vain. She joined to a brilliant wit, the greatest humanity and the best of hearts. This naturally endeared her to me, and though by reason of her marriage, and her being the celebrated Quaker preacher, I am now deprived of her company, yet I am happy, when she calls upon me, to see that she retains her usual cheerfulness, and I cannot help regretting those days of entertainment and innocent mirth, which we have so often enjoyed together.

About this period an application was made to me by Mr. Woodfield, to pay a considerable sum for some red champagne, which, by Mr. Calcraft's desire, I had ordered from him to send to Lord Granby in Germany; and I had another demand from Fimmore, of the Star and Garter tavern, for claret, which I had likewise indiscreetly wrote an order for Calcraft, when I resided in Parliament-street. As I could not think myself liable to these demands, I took no manner of notice of them; the consequence of which was, that they both commenced actions against me.

Accordingly, as I was preparing one night for the opera, I was honoured with a visit from two of the catchpole fraternity, who told me I must take the air with them, before I indulged my ears. The debt I had contracted of Woodfield, on Lord Granby's account, I could by no means litigate. His Lordship was abroad, and I was too much indebted to his generosity to think of writing to him upon such a subject.

When I arrived at the officer's house, the man seeing me better dressed than his visitors usually were, and recollecting my voice, he took my word for my settling Mr. Woodfield's action the next day; and giving bail for the other, which I was determined to contest, in order at once to expose Mr. Calcraft, and try the validity of my protection. For though I did not lodge in the Ambassador's house, I was actually his house-keeper, and remained upon the list till the Comte's death. But I only availed myself of his protection once. Whilst this affair

was



was in agitation I sent for Mr. Willis, Mr. Calcraft's clerk, to whom I remonstrated upon this fresh instance of his master's ill treatment, but could obtain no redress. My letter to Mr. Calcraft will, however, elucidate these mean and ungentleman-like transactions. I was obliged, by this unexpected event, to have recourse, once more, to the friendship of Mr. Hearne, who immediately assisted me. This last sum, accumulated that gentleman's debt to six hundred and forty pounds; for, besides the different sums I had borrowed of him, he had redeemed some valuables which I had left with Mr. Maclewsain, of Dublin, in order to discharge every demand upon me when last I was in that kingdom.

Among these things was a gold enamelled snuff-box, a gift of the beautiful Countess of Kildare, (since Duchess of Leinster) and as such was esteemed invaluable by me. This, I own, was the only piece of elegance I ever severely regretted parting with; nor should I ever have parted with it, had there not been almost a certainty of my having so valuable a mark of her Ladyship's partiality restored to me. This deposit, together with three or four dividends, and some tickets at my benefactor's disposal, have been able to pay off this large debt; and infinitely happy shall I be, if ever it is in my power to discharge it. In the mean time, I shall retain the most lively gratitude for such frequent interpositions in my favour.

The being too sanguine in my hopes has led me into many difficulties; but the indulgence of these expectations, originated from my having been so supremely fortunate as to meet with such singular friends as the Misses Meredith, Miss St. Leger, Miss Conway, Lady Tyrone, and Mrs. Craic, as well as Mr. Woodward, whose former passion was now mellowed into friendship. I have, however, had the mortification to outlive them all.

Female friendship never becomes the subject of my pen, or of my conversation; but that most beautiful description given of it by Shakespeare, in his "Midsummer Night's

"Night's Dream," immediately occurs to my memory, and raises in my mind the most pleasing sensations. As it is not inapplicable here, the mutual affection which subsisted between the foregoing ladies and myself, being of the purest and most exalted kind, I will transcribe for you the lines.

"Is all the counsel that we two have shar'd,  
 "The sister vows, the hours that we have spent,  
 "When we have chid the hasty-footed time  
 "For parting us! O! and is all forgot?  
 "All school-days friendship, childhood innocence  
 "We, Hermia, like two artificial gods,  
 "Created with our needles both one flower,  
 "Both on one sampler, sitting on one cushion,  
 "Both warbling of one song, both in one key,  
 "As if our hands, our sides, voices, and minds,  
 "Had been incorporate. So we grew together,  
 "Like to a double cherry, seeming parted,  
 "But yet an union in partition;  
 "Two lovely berries moulded on one stem,  
 "So with two seeming bodies, but one heart;  
 "Two of the first, like coats in heraldry,  
 "Due but to one, and crowned with one crest."

G. A. B.

# LETTER LXXXIII.

October 8, 17—

**A**T this period Mrs. Quacrost died; which gave me great pain, as we were for years in the strictest friendship. This excellent woman was greatly regretted by all who were acquainted with her eminent virtues. She possessed the most enchanting placidity of disposition, joined to the most liberal sentiments; and notwithstanding she was a miracle of chastity herself, she felt compassion for the frailties of her sex. Nor did she think herself contaminated by an intimacy with a much-injured woman.

\* Act III. Scene VII.

man,

man, that she knew had been grossly imposed upon, and most wickedly traduced.

Permit me just to say, upon this occasion, (for, if I recollect aright, I have touched upon the subject in a former letter) I have always observed that the *really* virtuous of our sex, ever view with compassion the errors of those, who have been seduced by the artifices of designing men; and, though totally unacquainted themselves with the frailties of human nature, in this point, can bestow a tear of pity on the martyr of an unguarded moment. Chastity is undoubtedly the brightest ornament that adorns the female mind. I agree with Diana, when she says,

“ My chastity’s the jewel of our house,

“ Bequeathed down from many ancestors;

“ Which were the ignatious obloquy this world

“ In me to lose?”

But I can by no means allow, as the censorious part of the sex seem to consider it, that this virtue is the *only* needful one; and when a person has been unhappily deprived of it, though by the most seductive arts, every other good qualification takes its flight with it.

Lady Tyrawley’s health visibly declining, I became very apprehensive that her loss would soon succeed that of my much regretted friend just mentioned. Few evenings passed, without my receiving a summons to Somerset-house. Her Ladyship, however, remained in this situation for three or four years.

As soon as the theatre shut up, I again visited the *con-*  
*thent*. I had there the pleasure of hearing, that Madam  
 Brilliant, the French actress I have frequently mentioned,  
 had retired from the gay scene of life she had been so  
 long engaged in, to the gloom of a convent. Though still  
 esteemed in her theatrical profession, and with an exten-  
 sive train of admirers, among whom was one of the first  
 Dukes in that kingdom, she resisted all their solicitations,  
 and notwithstanding she had been so unfortunate as to lose  
 her reputation, she had the resolution to prefer fasting.

ACT III. SCENE IV.

\* All’s well that ends well, ACT IV. Scene II.

and



and a breviary, to all the elegance and splendor of Paris. This, in my idea, is *real virtue*; especially as she had forfeited the opinion of the world. But she is amply repaid for every worldly loss, by that happy tranquillity she now, if she still be living, enjoys.

My going abroad this year was occasioned by the following circumstance. One of my creditors promised that he would sign my letter of licence, if I would pay him thirty guineas, and he gave me assurance in writing of his doing so; notwithstanding which, the very evening of the day I had paid the money on, he served me with a copy of a writ for the remainder. Exasperated at such ungenerous treatment, I gave bail, and determined to stand trial. Upon this occasion Mr. Woodward recommended Mr. Zachary Stephens, solicitor in Chancery-lane, to me, to carry on the suit. He undertook the cause, but through some neglect as the officer declared (either of his not being served with a proper notice, or his not serving one,) judgment was suffered to go against me, by what is termed default.

Distracted at the supposition of my bail's suffering upon my account, and apprehensive for my own liberty, I went, in order to accept the offered friendship of Mrs. Collier, who had settled in France, to avoid the persecution and extravagance of one of the worst of husbands. That lady immediately lent me the sum I required, and took my note payable in a year. At her house I renewed my former acquaintance with the beautiful Miss A——, who was sent abroad upon account of her having formed an imprudent partiality for a celebrated singer. I should not have mentioned this circumstance, but as it led to a very disagreeable one many years after.

Indeed, my life has been productive of so many untoward, and almost incredible events, that were there not many persons still living who can bear witness to the authenticity of them; I should be ashamed to relate them, as they must appear rather the memoirs of a *female Crusoe*, than a relation of facts. Such, however, should curiosity lead to enquiries, they will be found to be.

Upon

Upon my return to London, I was informed that Miss Wilford, a cousin of Mrs. Rich's, was to debute in Estifania. This, added to the alteration in my circumstances, caused a great alteration in Mrs. Rich's deportment to me. "There was a time," as Shore says\*, when my approach would make a little holiday; and every face was dressed in smiles to see me." But as that lady's regards were only shewn to those who bask in sun-shine, and not to poor beings enveloped in a cloud of distress, I was no longer a favourite with her.

I could not, I acknowledge, claim a right to object to the lady's having a trial-part; but considering the terms I had formerly been upon with the family, I imagined I had at least a right to be consulted on the propriety of her appearance. At this time I had no acquaintance with any of them, except the late Mrs. Valquer, Mr. Rich's youngest daughter. This lady possessed many shining qualities. To unaffected manners, was added a goodness of heart which was visible in all her words and actions. I consequently did not chuse to give her pain, by making her acquainted with the alteration which had taken place in her step-dame's behaviour towards me.

About this time Mr. Kelly's "Thespis" was published. He therein attributes my not making the same eclat in my profession I had formerly done, to the embarrassed state of my finances; but to make amends for this disagreeable observation, he pays a compliment to my feelings. I did not, however, esteem myself in the least obliged; as I never wish my left hand, upon such occasions, to know what my right hand does.

Just before the theatre opened, a very untoward circumstance happened to me, which gave the proprietors an opportunity, as they thought, of degrading me more in the eyes of the public than they had already endeavoured to do; and they did not fail to take advantage of it, as the ensuing season was the last of my article. I had paid Mrs. Ray, for that was the name of my inexorable prosecutrix, for two years, the sum stipulated; for which

I only took receipts as it was paid, not knowing there was any necessity to see the four hundred pounds wrote off the obligation.

As this was the case, I was surprised to hear she had called very often at my lodgings. Comte Haslang being very ill of the gout, my whole time was so taken up by my attendance upon him, that I was seldom at home till late; by which means she was prevented from letting me know her business. She at last left a note, informing me, that if I would insure my life, she should be perfectly easy with regard to her debt. In order to get rid of so disagreeable a visitant, I sent her for answer, that if she would appoint a proper person to transact the affair, I would comply with her request, as I would by no means see or speak with her.

The next day my valuable friend and patron the eldest Mr. Fox, who still flattered me with marks of his attention, had promised to dine with me. Before his arrival, Mrs. Ray, accompanied by a man, came in a coach to the door. Though I could not imagine what could be her motive for requesting me to insure my life, as I was at that time in perfect health, yet I expected the person she should send me with impatience. Accordingly I ordered the man to be admitted, but the lady was refused, as I had given positive orders she should never be suffered to enter my doors.

A man, who seemed to be an Italian Jew, now made his appearance. As soon as he was seated, not having any doubt of the nature of his business, I asked him what the insurance of my life, for the remaining four hundred pounds due to Mrs. Ray, would be? He appeared to be much surprised at my question. Upon which I repeated it. When he informed me, in broken English, that I was mistaken in his business. He said, the Tripoline Ambassador, to whom he was interpreter, having long admired me, and finding that I was indebted to the lady in question, he had offered to pay her the sum that was due to her, as well as my other demands, could she introduce his Excellency to me. I now found that the proposal for the insurance of my life, was only made use of as introductory to this plan.

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All the passions that ever entered into a female breast, immediately exerted their whole dominion over me. I was in an instant torn by rage, contempt, and offended pride. I know not which was most predominant; they each ruled by turns; and as I had never met with so gross an insult before, the contending passions deprived me of the power of utterance. I was almost choked. As soon as I could a little recover myself, I pulled the bell; and the servant immediately answering it, I ordered him to shew the fellow down stairs. The pander, fearing from my manner, and the appearance of the footman, that if he did not directly comply, he would be in danger of being shewn the shortest way down, hastily rejoined his companion, and away they drove; and I soon after found, to my cost, that enraged at my not falling a prey to her machinations, Mrs. Ray went straight to her attorney, and entered up the judgment for the sum of nine hundred pounds, two of which consisted of debts that she had bought up to accumulate her own.

G. A. B.

## LETTER LXXXIV.

Oct. 15, 17—

AS soon as Mr. Fox, and some other guests, who had dined with me, were departed, I prepared to go to his Excellency's to cards; but as I passed through Jermyn-street, I was overtaken by the wretch's brother, who, almost breathless with running after me, informed me that a man, who came up at the same time, had an action against me, at his sister's suit. The shock had such an effect upon me, that I dropped down speechless in the street. Two such insults, so quickly succeeding each other, were not to be supported. Had the latter come singly, I could have borne it with Roman fortitude; but, united, they were too severe a trial.

Had I been able to preserve my reason upon this occasion, and been acquainted with the laws, I might have preserved my liberty, at least for that night; for it seems the fellows who arrested me, had, in their great hurry, forgot

forgot the warrant ; without which, I find, the caption is not valid ; but, during my imbecillity, one of them ran for it. You see from this instance, at once, how necessary it is to preserve an equanimity of mind upon these trying occasions ; and likewise how much it behoves persons who are so unfortunate as to be in debt, to make themselves acquainted with the powers of those who are employed in the execution of the laws by unfeeling and rigorous creditors. I have often lamented, that similar laws to those of Scotland are not in force here. There, such as are so unfortunate as to be confined for debt, upon delivering up their all, are liberated in a short time. By this means the prisons are empty, and the creditor receives at least a part of his debt ; which, otherwise, would probably, as is too often the case, be dissipated during confinement. Lenity is productive of renewed industry ; and to the honour of the Scots be it spoken, that people, as I had an opportunity of observing when among them, join the most scrupulous honesty to that good qualification.

I was taken, during this state of insensibility, to the officer's house in Stanhope-street, Clare-Market ; which happened to be the same, where my brother Captain O'Hara, I have mentioned in a former letter, was confined. It was so long before I came to myself, that the surgeon, who was sent for to bleed me, was apprehensive for my life.—Happy would it have been, even at this period, if these apprehensions had been realized. For I might justly say with Matilda, “ Had some good angel  
“ opened the book of providence, and let me see my  
“ life, my heart had burst when it beheld the woes, one  
“ by one, which I was to endure.”

The mistress of the house had some feeling ; and seeing me dressed above the common line, though plain, and having besides conceived some partiality for me, not only on account of my being an actress, but as a sister to her favourite captain, who had so often been her lodger, she paid me more attention than persons generally meet with in such places. She sent for my maid, and kindly prevented all noise and confusion in the house, for five days, during which I remained in a state of silent insensibility.

nity. My maid, to return the obligations she thought I lay under to all those who sent to enquire after me, took the servants that brought the messages, which were not a few, to the bar, and treated them with what they would have; and this made no inconsiderable addition to my expences.

The sixth morning of my residence in this place, the woman of the house came up to me, and told me that the writ was returnable the next day, and if I did not eat and drink, and get a *habeas corpus*, I should be carried a corpse to Newgate. The name of that dreadful place made me tremble; but, at the same time, it roused me as if I had been electrified. I immediately recovered from my stupidity, and asked her what was to be done? she informed me, that it would be necessary for me to employ an attorney to procure a *habeas* for me, and also to send and engage a lodging within the rules of the King's Bench. She added, that her son, who was an attorney, was below, and would be glad to serve me. She concluded with telling me, that persons in the law never advanced any money for their clients; though indeed they did not expect to have their bills settled immediately, especially where it was safe, as it must be with a lady who had credit enough to ~~owe~~ one person twelve hundred pounds. I startled at the mention of so large a sum, and desired her to explain herself; which she did by telling me, that was the debt for which the execution was levied against me.

What was now to be done I scarcely knew. I had but a few guineas about me. The Comte was too much indisposed to inform him of my situation; and as my maid, upon her first being made acquainted with it, had sent word to his excellency that I had had a fall, which prevented me from attending his lordship, I knew not how to contradict her message. Mr. Woodward, as well as every other person I could hope for assistance from, were out of town. I was informed that the *habeas* would not be more than five or six pounds; but that the expence of the rules would be considerable, exclusive of my finding proper sureties.



I now began to consider who I could send to upon this emergency. I had known Mrs. Stacie, when her husband kept an inn at Stilton. They had since removed to the Bedford Arms in Covent-Garden. Having conceived a very strong attachment for her, from frequently calling at their house at Stilton, I had promised to stand sponsor to the child she was pregnant with, upon my return from the north. I had not only performed this promise, but had been called upon to appear upon the same occasion to two others.

Upon the strength of this acquaintance, I immediately applied to her for twelve guineas. I thought that sum, with what I had, would be sufficient to pay the whole of my expences here; but, to my inconceivable surprise, they amounted to as much again; so that I paid very handsomely for the civility the mistress of the house had shewn me, in keeping it quiet.

Mrs. Stacie came immediately on my sending to her, and could not refrain from tears, at seeing me in such an unexpected situation. Her husband had given her a bill for twenty pounds, which she let me have; and upon hearing that I had obstinately refused all food, when she returned, she sent me a supper of all the niceties their house afforded.

At the time this affair happened, my mother was upon a visit in Oxfordshire, and Miss Wordley was at Richmond, where she was engaged in the theatrical line. But the latter, upon being wrote to by my servant, flew up to town, and brought me all the money she could muster or borrow; which was very necessary towards settling my bill.

In return for the civility the mistress of the house had shewn me, I asked her to partake of the supper Mrs. Stacie sent me. She chearfully accepted my invitation. During our meal, she enumerated all the persons of quality who had occasionally been her visitors. Among others of her guests, she informed me that the wretched Ayliffe had been one, and continued there till he was removed to Newgate.

After

After supper, she asked if she should entertain me with a song; for she was reckoned, she said, to have a very fine voice. The oddity of her manner, as she made the proposal, joined to her masculine figure, had such an effect upon my imagination, that I instantly burst into a violent fit of laughter. Miss Wordley, who was always anxious about me to an extreme, was apprehensive that I had fallen into hystericks; and the mistress of the house, concluding they would be attended with the same faintings I had experienced since I had been her unfortunate lodger, was also much alarmed; but upon my assuring her that I had now summoned up all my resolution, she favoured me with a specimen of her talents, to our entire satisfaction. The approbation we expressed gave her such sensible pleasure, that she concluded with telling me, she was sure, as I was fond of music, I *must* be pleased with her voice.

That evening I received a letter from Mr. Woodward, who was just come to town, wherein he requested that I would permit him to visit me. In my answer, I begged that he would not attempt it; but I told him, that I should be obliged to him if he would send some person to get me a lodging in the Rules, and be one of my sureties, Mr. Stacie having offered to be the other. To this he readily consented. I now resolved to keep up my spirits, though I was informed I must go into the prison, notwithstanding I had it in my power to obtain the Rules.

The next morning Mr. Thomas, then Lord Mansfield's clerk, came himself with the tipstaff, to conduct me over to the warden. Mr. Marsden very politely met me at the door of his house, and conducted me into the parlour. My attorney having attended Mr. Woodward and Mr. Stacie there in the morning, to settle for the Rules, the Marshal knew of my coming, and I found every thing usual for breakfast prepared against I arrived.

This grand point being settled, I went to a little vile lodging, which had been taken for me, at the house belonging to the Windmill in St. George's Fields; a spot rendered famous by Shakespeare, from being noticed by Justice Shallow, in the "Second Part of Henry the

"Fourth\*." For this wretched place I was to pay two guineas a week; but the time to procure me a lodging had been so short, that the first which offered was fixed upon.

Mr. Marsden attended me himself, with great complaisance, to my new apartments; and I was not a little surprised, upon our being seated, at his taking out a large purse of gold, and presenting it to me, with a request, that I would make use of it for my present exigencies, and return it to him when convenient. As an inducement for my doing this, he observed, that my expences must have been very great at the officer's house; for though the woman was remarkably civil, she generally made her guests pay for that civility. I told him, that my residence at the officer's house had indeed been expensive, and related to him what had occasioned it; but I begged to decline his offer, assuring him that I was not at present in need of his kind assistance. Upon which he took his leave; entreating me, as he went out, to let him know if I should at any time happen to be short of cash.

When Mr. Marsden was gone, I could not help expressing my surprise to Miss Wordley, who had accompanied me in this *confined* tour, at his generous politeness. My companion instantly replied, "I am amazed  
"at your simplicity! You may be assured it comes ori-  
"ginally from Mr. Woodward! As you have so often  
"rejected his pecuniary assistance, I plainly see he has  
"taken this method to serve you, without being morti-  
"fied by a refusal."

In the evening that gentleman came to pay me a visit; when he advised me to write, as soon as possible, to the Attorney-General, my much honoured friend Mr. Yorke, to consult him upon my case. But Mr. Woodward not making me an offer of his assistance, at this time, I was convinced that Miss Wordley's supposition was well founded. Indeed, her sagacity and superior understanding, enabled her to see every event clearer, in all points of view, than most people.



The next day I desired her to take a letter to Mr. Yorke. My honourable (and now, alas! my much regretted) friend, immediately wrote me an answer, wherein he informed me, in the kindest terms, that he would pay every attention to the affair, and would do all in his power to extricate me from it. But as nothing could be done till November, he requested me to accept the inclosed bills, in lieu of what his loved sister, Lady Anson, had intended to bequeath to me, had she not been taken away suddenly. He then advised me, if my creditor could not be prevailed on to compromise the debt, to stand trial; when he was well assured, he said, a verdict would be given in my favour; but as his excellency, Comte Haslang, was advanced in years, it might continue pending over my head for some time.—In how pleasing a manner was this favour conferred! the delicacy and politeness with which it was accompanied, gave it double value, and claimed my warmest acknowledgments.

Finding I must make up my mind to my present situation, as nothing could be done for so long a time, I sent Miss Wordley to seek out another apartment; for though, by Mr. Yorke's bounty, I found myself possessed of two hundred pounds, yet it was visible that the noble donor had sent me that sum, on purpose to enable me to compromise the debt with Mrs. Ray, should she consent to it. Miss Wordley accordingly fixed on two rooms adjoining to the Dog and Duck, at twelve shillings a week; which were more eligible, better furnished, and much airier, than those I was now in. There was, indeed, no convenient accommodation for my friend, but she agreed to put up with the best we could make, those nights on which her engagement at Richmond would permit her to be with me.

I was in hopes I should have been able to compress the whole of the tedious detail of this disagreeable affair in one letter; but as I find I have many circumstances yet to relate concerning it, I must be obliged to make it the subject of my next.—You will readily perceive, that I carefully avoid making any addition to the prolixity, by the insertion of any of my usual remarks or quotations.—

In several places where my pen was about to take advantage of an opening, and set off, I have instantly checked it; lest whilst I should afford a relief to the sameness of the subject, it should run it into too great a length— This inveterate prosecution, carried on against me because I would not conform to the abandoned wishes of the prosecutrix, proved a source of much unhappiness to me; I shall therefore hurry through the relation of it as fast as possible; at once to put an end to the corrosive reflections which torture my mind as I write it, and to carry you with all dispatch through a scene that can give you no great pleasure.—For, whilst I strive to preserve your friendship, and to regain the good opinion of the world, by a narrative of the most interesting events of my life, I should think myself undeserving of both, was I to spare any pains to render it as pleasing and entertaining as it lies in my power to do.

G. A. B.

## LETTER LXXXV.

Oct. 23, 17—.

AS soon as I was settled in my new residence, I sent to Counsellor Murphy, to request his advice and assistance. He undertook, with the greatest alacrity, to try to prevail on my opponent to receive the money, agreeable to the former settlement. If he could not effect this, he assured me he would undertake my cause, and exert his utmost abilities in my defence. Numerous were the presents which I received whilst I continued in the Rules; particularly from Earl Spencer and General Monckton, who both possessed the soul of generosity.

Mrs. Stacie took lodgings in the house adjoining to where I was, for herself, her maid servant, and little boy; and her husband sent me every delicacy the season afforded. This, although every thing was undoubtedly to be paid for, I could not but esteem a great mark of respect and attention.

An

An accident happened at this time which greatly alarmed me, and threatened to bring the scenes I have been describing, to a premature and dreadful *dénouement*. I had discharged my lodging in town, together with my footman and maid-servant; I had sent my black to Mr. Woodward, and kept only my old Grace, a black-bird, and a favourite dog.

The latter had for some days appeared to be ill, and refused all food; when upon my calling him, in order to induce him to eat, the little animal flew to me, with seeming fondness, and fixed his teeth in my upper lip. Mr. Woodward, who happened to be present, instantly exclaimed, "I hope you do not bleed." This, with my observing affectionate apprehensions in the looks of every person in the room, made me conclude the dog to be mad, and that I should partake of his malady. I was consequently seized with inexpressible horrors, to which the gloom of my situation made no inconsiderable addition; and if I did not fear death itself, yet I could not help being shocked when I imagined him to be approaching, armed with unusual terrors.

It is well known, that dangers appear much more alarming in apprehension than in reality. My feelings upon the present occasion confirmed this truth; for Mr. Bromfield, who had been sent for as soon as the accident happened, declared that I felt infinitely more than if the salival infection had operated with its full force. Such a deep impression did this event make on my mind, that for several years after, I was in agonies upon the anniversary of the day on which it happened.

Mr. Woodward endeavoured to persuade me, that there was not the least room for me to give way to these apprehensions. He assured me the next morning, that the creature followed him home, the preceding evening, and swam over a piece of water which lay in the way; an indisputable proof, that it was perfectly free from every symptom of the hydrophobia. But his ordering it to be hanged, the moment he got home, seemed to prove, that what he said was rather to dispel my fears than his real sentiments.

As



As I continued to be indisposed, my appearance in public would have been impracticable. I was not even able to leave my room; upon which account, I did not regret the loss of liberty so much as I otherwise should have done. Particular orders were given, that I should not be left alone; and the Richmond company being returned to winter quarters, I had my much-beloved Miss Wordley constantly with me. Our affection for each other was so fervent and reciprocal, that she seemed to suffer equally with myself; and she was continually unhappy, lest the uncommon melancholy by which I was overwhelmed, should end in a hasty decline. Nothing could exceed the attention she paid to me. She watched every alteration in my temper or health with the most anxious solicitude; and as she was now my bed-fellow, if I even stirred, I found her awake. This affectionate concern, at length caused a visible alteration in *her* health; which contributed more to facilitate my recovery, than it was in the power of medicine to do. I determined to be well, that my much-esteemed friend might be the same; and my exertions succeeded.

Mr. Murphy, to whom I acknowledge myself under the greatest obligations, came over to me as often as his other avocations would permit. He had endeavoured to prevail upon my revengeful creditor to settle the affair, but without effect. There was consequently no alternative but bringing it to trial. Mr. Jennings, of Carey-street, was my voluntary attorney upon this occasion. Being desirous to have a cause, of which he had the conducting, come on before his great General, his business hitherto being only with bailiffs and arrests, he applied to Mr. Stacie, and offered me his assistance without fee or reward. He thought he should be fully repaid by the credit he should gain from the employ, and being introduced thereby into better company than he had been used to. As he was known to be a good solicitor, Mr. Woodward accepted his service in my behalf; and in requital, employed him till his death.

As I was assured of success, the approach of the trial gave me rather pleasure than pain. At length the expected

pected day arrived; and Mr. Murphy entered my apartment, almost breathless, to announce my triumph. But I was disappointed in reaping the advantages I should have done from my success, by the lady's dying soon after. Had she lived, and I had renewed my suit in the court of King's Bench, there is no doubt but I should have obtained a severe decree against her. The method she made use of to augment her debt, by purchasing others, being, as I have been informed, against the laws of this country.

I wrote immediately to thank my honourable patron; who answered me, and wished, as I had now established my protection, that I would, if possible settle the debt, for the reasons he had before alledged. Application was accordingly made to Mrs. Ray's executors, who had agreed to take two hundred pounds down, and two hundred more at the expiration of a year. I have reason to believe my adversaries would have been gainers, by accepting my offer when it was first made, as the suit must have cost them a very considerable sum. By the generous assistance I received from my kind friends, it was not attended with any loss to me.

Thus ended an event which had caused me so much anxiety, and had been the means of my first experiencing the *greatest* of all losses, *the loss of liberty*\*. "For disguise thyself how thou wilt, still slavery,"—as my favourite Sterne says,—“still thou art a bitter draught; and though thousands in all ages have been made to drink of thee, thou art no less bitter on that account.”—Feeling with equal sensibility, from having been deprived of her protection, the force of that inimitable writer's subjoined address to *Liberty*, though written only from imagination, I cannot refrain from making use of it, upon this occasion, to express my own sentiments.—“It is thou, thrice sweet and gracious Goddess, whom all in public or in private worship, whose taste is grateful, and will be so, till NATURE herself shall change—No tint of words can spot thy snowy mantle, nor chymic power turn thy sceptre into iron.—With thee to smile

\* Sterne's Sentimental Journey, Vol. II. Page 87.

“ upon

" upon him as he eats his crust, the swain is happier than the monarch, from whose court thou art exiled."

I had sent to the proprietors, to let them know that I should be able to perform on the tenth of November; and as I had taken the lodging I was in for a certain term, I chose to reside there till the expiration of it. Accordingly at that time I obtained a day rule, and went to the theatre, but I found that my service was not needful. All the performers seemed happy to see me at liberty; the manager alone appeared to be indifferent about it, having been influenced by his co-partner, Mrs. Rich, who had resolved that her cousin, Miss Wilford, should supersede me.

Prepossession has great weight with the world in general. Humanity, however, is the leading characteristic of this nation. The public, consequently, would not suffer *a child of their favour* to be oppressed, even though they were to be entertained by what was supposed rising merit. The proprietors had taken advantage of my unhappy situation, to introduce the young lady just mentioned in Cordelia. I could not with propriety object to this arrangement, but the public, being partial in my favour, did for me. This induced the proprietors to announce me.

Upon this occasion, as the daughter-of misfortune, I was to be visited by some unforeseen event, that should tend to perplex and distress me. My maid had put into the coach, which took me to the theatre, a box, containing my remaining ornaments (which, indeed, were not of any great value) together with the properties I wanted for that night, and by some means or other it was lost. Among the former were some miniature portraits; *one* of which, and a locket, I sincerely regretted; as I also did the bracelets, left me by my deceased friend Miss Meredith.

The gain was trivial to the finder, but of such consequence *to me*, that I offered a reward of fifty pounds, though without success. A similar misfortune happened to me once before. Some years back, I unfortunately dropt a pocket-book in the Green Park, wherein there were four bank notes of one hundred pounds each. This

I likewise



I likewise had advertised, promising to give up the notes, with a large reward besides, if the person who had found it would send a paper which was therein. That advertisement had met with no better success than the present. Indeed I was informed, that I had acted wrong in making such an offer, as the acceptance of it would come under the denomination of felony. I am, however, not without my suspicions, that *another person* found an advantage in my loss. But as this is only conjecture, I shall drop all thoughts of *my loss* for ever; not doubting, but that even-handed justice will return the ingredients of the poisoned chalice, if not in "the corrupted currents of this world, where offence's gilded hand may shove by justice; and oft 'tis seen the wicked prize itself buys out the law;" "it will above, where there is no shuffling; where the action lies in its true nature; and we ourselves are compelled, even to the teeth and forehead of our faults, to give in evidence\*."

The dilemma I was thrown into by the loss of my box, greatly increased the anxiety I felt from appearing for the first time after my confinement; to which an ignominy is usually annexed, however undeserved that confinement may have been. I was so curtailed in my dress by the loss, that I was obliged to borrow even an under-petticoat. At length I was supplied with every necessary by the kind attention of Mrs. Whitfield, my dresser; as I have since lain under greater obligations to this worthy woman, as will be seen in the sequel, I think it proper to mention her name, and to add, that she is an honour to humanity. The public received me with marks of the warmest approbation.

The loss of my box made me resolve not to run the risque of meeting with such an untoward accident again. I therefore changed my plan of residing in my present lodging, and took one in Suffolk-street.

The tragedy of "King Lear" was announced, in which Miss Wilford had appeared in Cordelia at the last representation. Mr. Younger, the prompter, who had the best of hearts, imagined, by the reception I met with

\* Hamlet, Act III. Scene VIII.

upon my late performance; that no manager would endeavour to add to my depression, by forcing upon the public a person of whom they did not approve; he therefore obliterated her name, and put mine in the bills.

At twelve o'clock, I received a visit from Mr. Gibson, the deputy-manager, who informed me of the mistake, and requested I would give up the part; telling me at the same time, that the managers would, upon my doing so, give out hand bills to announce the error to the public. I was not *then* divested of that disposition which spurns at injuries. I felt the affront with more irascibility, than prudence perhaps would have permitted; but *prudence* was a virtue which, at that period, my best friends did not allow me to be possessed of; nor could I, indeed, with justice, lay any claim to it. It cannot be supposed, therefore, that I considered the consequences that should result from whatever answer I might give.

I instantly replied, "I am an *indulged servant* of the public, and let what will happen, I will not suffer my name to be altered; but play the character *I will*." Mr. Gibson then left me, with seeming regret, declaring I should draw upon me the hatred of the family. To which I answered with some warmth, "I have long set that at nought; I neither covet their favour, nor fear their malice. I depend upon that patronage I have ever met with; and will stand or fall by that candour and indulgence, I have always been treated with by the public."

Upon sending my servant to look at the play-bills, she brought me word that the men were at that moment changing them; and that the mistake was pointed out in a *Nota-Bene*. Hearing this, I instantly sent to have hand-bills printed, and distributed among the audience as they went into the house. In this bill I only mentioned the circumstance which had occasioned it, simply as it was; at the same time telling them, that as I esteemed myself the acknowledged child of their favour, I thought it my duty to *be ready* in case I should, that evening, be honoured with the preference.

When the curtain drew up, there was an universal cry for your humble servant; and upon Cordelia's appearance, notwithstanding

notwithstanding she was the favoured child of the families of the Rich's and the Wilford's, she was obliged to withdraw and give place to me. Being ready dressed for the character, I immediately made my *entré*, amidst an universal applause; and I do not recollect that I ever met with more tokens of approbation, in so trivial a character, during my theatrical existence.

This event was the more flattering, as it assured me, that I was still held in estimation by the public. It might be alledged, that my fair rival, *who was undoubtedly an excellent dancer*, had not *then* arrived at any reputation as a tragedian; and the visible depression of a declared partiality, might strongly operate in my favour.

The young lady, whose mortification, it must be supposed, was very great, came into the green-room, and said, she was surprized any performer would presume to affront Mrs. Rich. I could have told her, that her *good* cousin affronted the public much more, by forcing her *then* uninformed relation upon them; but as I neither dreaded the frowns of the Lady Directress, nor hoped for her favour, I held the little Cordelia's speech in too much contempt to make any reply to it.

G. A. B.

## L E T T E R LXXXVI.

November 6, 17—.

**A**T the conclusion of this season my agreement at Covent-Garden expired; and at the same time the patent was disposed of to Messrs. Colman, Harris, Powell, and Rutherford. Hearing nothing for some time from Mr. Colman, who was the acting manager, relative to a renewal of my articles, I gave over all hopes of an engagement with them; however, Mr. Woodward called upon me one day, and informed me, that he had had an interview with the commandant, in which, having enquired whether I was engaged by them, our modern Terence replied, "Yes! I depend upon her; but multiplicity of business has prevented me from calling upon her; I shall be obliged to you, if you will inform her, that I propose doing myself the pleasure very soon."

I was



I was not only happy at being assured of a new engagement, but being under the direction of a manager, whose knowledge and talents I held in the highest estimation. Accordingly, the next day, I had the satisfaction of having my articles renewed for three years; and being, as I thought, upon favoured terms of opinion with Mr. Colman, I supposed I should be restored, by the preference he would shew me, to my former eligible situation in the theatre. Actuated by this hope, I determined to spare no pains, in order to merit his continued approbation.

As Mr. Alderman Cracroft had lately married the beautiful Miss Drax, he was employed in a higher circle than formerly; and had declined receiving and paying my salary among my creditors. Whilst I was an inhabitant of St. George's-fields, he sent over to desire I would give him a fresh security for what I owed him, and I feel a sensible concern when I reflect that I never saw him more.

Mr. Powell, of the Pay-Office, whose premature death furnished, not long ago, a topic for general conversation; took upon him the execution of this trust during one season; but as it was attended with some trouble, he, at the end of that time, thought fit to decline it. This, I must acknowledge, I considered as very strange, and rather unkind; as I had every right to expect his friendship, from my having been the first means of his being introduced to Mr. Fox, though I only knew him as deputy-treasurer of Covent-Garden theatre. Undoubtedly he was possessed of every requisite for business; but when he came to be a great man, he, like many others, kicked down the ladder by which he had mounted.

As Mr. Woodward had shewn a friendly forwardness to serve me upon every occasion, and his integrity was so well known, I requested him to take upon himself the employment. This he did, and all my creditors were well pleased with the nomination. His punctuality was such, that he left the dividend at his chambers, in Clements-Inn, sealed up for each separately; so that if he happened to be from home, they had not the trouble of calling a second time: and as he likewise left the receipts ready written, they were detained no longer than whilst they signed their names.

Such

Such punctuality and attention, must secure persons the respect and good-will of all those who happen to have business with them.—Punctuality in every concern, is not less laudable than its concomitant, honesty.—It is not, indeed, usually considered as a principle of equal import; the advantages arising to society from it will, however, be found to be very little short of those resulting from the latter.—Were it more attended to, how would it smooth the intercourse between man and man; especially those who constitute the commercial part of a people! So conspicuously needful is an attention to it, that what I have said in some of my former letters, relative to the observance of a promise, (and as I am an enthusiast in that point, my enforcement of it has not been lukewarm) will equally suit the virtue I am here recommending; for a *virtue* it is, though not one of the cardinal ones.

We opened the campaign with some eclat, as Mr. Powell was justly admired; and there is no doubt but he would have proved an ornament to the stage, had he time to acquire that knowledge which is requisite to make the profession a science. But very few give themselves leisure, or take the trouble, to arrive at the goal. The intense application I have pointed out on a former occasion, is absolutely indispensable for arriving at perfection.—For want of this, many who possess great abilities, reach only mediocrity.

Our first appearance together was in Jaffier and Belvidera; and he was so extravagant in his encomiums upon my playing, that I had every reason to believe he had given over all thoughts of an engagement with Mrs. Yates. That he had this in view, was reported, and carried with it an air of probability; for, exclusive of the lady's extraordinary merit, it was natural to suppose he must entertain a partiality for the first heroine he ever appeared with.

In a few days the report of an engagement with Mrs. Yates was revived; and Mr. Colman called upon me, to inform me, that such a step was absolutely necessary, as it would be a great bar to their success, should she be engaged at Drury-lane, for which a treaty was then in agitation. At the same time he assured me, that no engagement whatever should injure *me*. Indeed, that it would

would rather be the reverse; as many pieces might be revived, in which we might *shine* (as he was pleased to express himself) together. Besides which, I should retain *most* of my characters, if not all of them.

Perfectly satisfied in this assurance, and having always been a warm admirer of Mrs. Yates's talents, I was really pleased at the engagement, instead of feeling any envious emotions. But I have some reason to believe, that she was of another opinion; for upon my going up to her, at the first rehearsal, in order to salute her, and congratulate myself, she very coldly received my greeting, and we did not afterwards speak. I have more than once said, I never was susceptible of the mean passion of envy; I therefore could not help being hurt at even a supposition's arising in my mind, that she could harbour an idea of my being capable of dissimulation. Whenever a coolness continues for any time between people, who are obliged in business to meet, disgust is generally the consequence. I frankly own this was the case with me. Mrs. Yates is the best judge of her own feelings upon the occasion.

A little time after, Mr. Colman introduced a young lady, by name Morris, in his play of the "English Merchant," in which she met with great approbation. She afterwards appeared in Juliet. As her youth and attractions were what Juliet should be, it would have been absurd to a degree, had I objected to her playing it; notwithstanding, at that period, it was not common to take the capital performer's characters from them, except for a person of acknowledged merit.

This fair flower, like a lily, reared awhile her head, displayed her beauties to the sun, and diffused around the sweetest odours—But transient as the lily was her fate—Like her lovely emblem surcharged with rain, she soon dropped, and charmed no more.—So eager was the grisly monster death to seize such perfection, and so hasty were his strides, that she was unable to appear at her own benefit in the character of Juliet. I was therefore solicited by her relations to perform that part, which I did with the greatest readiness; sincerely regretting at the same time the untimely decay of such promising merit, which probably



probably would have adorned the stage with another Farren.

Before the conclusion of the winter, the other two proprietors complained they were made cyphers. They alledged that Mr. Colman and Mr. Powell arrogated all the power to themselves, and were so expensive in the cloths and decorations, that they shared nothing, notwithstanding the houses in general were crowded. Mr. Powell and I seldom spoke, but upon the stage. As I had every reason to believe he had acted with duplicity, I naturally despised him; I therefore seldom went to the theatre, except when business called me.

About this time I was introduced to the worthy and celebrated Mr. Hoole, the justly admired translator of *Metastasio*, *Tasso*, and most of the great Italian poets. His lady and myself formed the strictest intimacy, and we were seldom separate. When I had leisure from my attendance at Golden-Square, we had little parties, either at my apartments or theirs. A relaxation of this nature was necessary to dispel the chagrin I felt, that all my visionary theatric castles were tottering.

Such indeed has been the sure consequence, of every favourable event of my life. I have always found that even those expectations which have seemed most certain, have vanished like *Sancho Panza's* supper. They have been seen, but not enjoyed.—And as the delicate viands which were spread before the hungry governor served only to increase his appetite, so my sanguine *certainties*, and sure expectancies, have led me into many expences, which, but for the flattering prospects these presented, I should not have incurred. A review of the incidents of my life, when they are all laid before you, will convince you, that never mortal found such a number of apparently well-grounded hopes, so fatally and completely blasted; and that by means which were not to be expected or avoided. I may with propriety exclaim upon this occasion with the fourth Harry,\*

“ Will fortune never come with both hands full,

“ But write her fair words still in foulest letters ?”

\* Second Part of Henry IV. A& IV. Scene VIII.

The

The ensuing summer I took a small house at Strand in the Green. The situation was beautiful, as it commanded the finest part of the Thames, and terminated with a view of Kew-bridge. Its being so near town was another inducement, for my attendance at the Comte's was almost daily expected.

When the next season commenced, the disagreement between the patentees became public. This broke out afresh, upon account of a very strange dispute indeed; which was no other, than Mr. Colman's insisting that Mrs. Yates should appear in the character of Imogen, in "Cymbeline;" a part in which she had long been established, and universally admired; and Messrs. Harris and Rutherford being equally strenuous that Mrs. Lessingham should have the preference. The beauty and figure of the latter were, I allow, greatly in her favour; but she could by no means be said to surpass Mrs. Yates, who joined *hard-earned* science to her other great qualifications. A process was begun in consequence of this rupture, which tended only to benefit the gentlemen of the long robe; for in the sequel it produced no other effect.

Mr. Powell, induced by some reason I could never account for, began, once more, to load me with flattery; but as I had no room to believe his compliments sincere, I treated him with infinite contempt. Mrs. Yates was overpersuaded to appear in Emilia, in the English Merchant; a character, notwithstanding what I have said of her beauty, totally unfit for her; and I played Lady Alton, which would much better have become that dignity and figure which she possesses in so eminent a degree.

I am now about to enter upon a very important event in my life, viz. the means by which I was prevented from publishing my letter to Mr. Calcraft. Had it found its way to the public *at that time*, it would, I flatter myself, have avenged me in some measure of a man who had treated me with such unparalleled injustice, and have vindicated my conduct, with respect to him, to the whole world. But as I was prevailed upon, I may say compelled, not to do it then, when it would have been of much more service to me, and have prevented many misfortunes which have since happened to me, I shall,

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as I have already promised you, send it to you by way of supplement to my narrative; for without it, many circumstances in my life will want elucidation.

As it makes so interesting a part of my story, I shall begin my next letter with it.—Nor will this be the only important circumstance that it will contain. You will read therein some other incidents, which will tend to confirm the observation I have lately made, that no mortal ever found their hopes so suddenly and completely frustrated as I have done.

G. A. B.

## LETTER LXXXVII.

November 14, 17—

**T**HE day of the representation of the “English Merchant,” as mentioned in my last, I had caused an advertisement to be inserted in all the public papers, to the following purport; “Speedily will be published, a letter from George Anne Bellamy, to John Calcraft, Esq; with this motto;

“So comes the reck’ning when the banquer’s o’er,  
“The dreadful reck’ning, and men smile no more.”

GAY.

Just before the piece was going to begin, Mr. Colman came into my dressing-room, and informed me, that in consequence of my advertisement, Mr. Calcraft had been at his house, vowing vengeance against the theatre, if I did not promise to give up all thoughts of such a publication; which, he said, was *at once putting a dagger into his heart, and a pistol to his head*. He concluded, with many imprecations, that if I did not at least give some time, he would not only put his threats into execution, but apply to the Lord Chamberlain, to have me silenced; and, moreover, turn my children adrift, who should perish before he would afford them any assistance.

Mr. Colman expressed some displeasure at the rudeness of Mr. Calcraft’s behaviour, who departed abruptly.

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The manager, however, actuated, I doubt not, by a regard for me, used many arguments to induce me to give up the point. Among others, he desired me to remember that I was playing under a letter of licence, and consequently, by persisting, I should greatly injure my creditors. To this he added every inducement that seemed likely to succeed. I was, however, still obstinate.

He then entreated, that I would only defer the publication till the end of the season. At length, yielding to his reiterated intreaties, I gave him my promise that I would consent to his wishes: a promise that I have never ceased repenting of, from the hour in which I made it, to the present: for had I persevered in my intention, the world would have been clearly convinced of the cruelty with which I had been treated.

But Mr. Calcraft was not indebted to me in the least for this compliance. The esteem and regard I entertained for the gentleman who negotiated the affair, was my only inducement. To him, and not to my betrayer, was the concession made. I was so exasperated at his having propagated a report that our separation was occasioned by some gallantries of mine, particularly with the Earl of Harrington, (as I have hinted before, and shall further explain in my letter) that I ought in justice to myself to have exposed his fallacies at the time.

But it was always to be my lot unfortunately to be over-ruled, when the steps I was about to take were dictated by prudence. I can only attribute my imprudent concession, in this case, to the instigation of that evil genius, who generally counteracted every design which seemed to be for my good. Not but that I am perfectly satisfied Mr. Colman had no other motive for his solicitations than friendship; and this weighed much with me. The consideration of his own interest was out of the question; for had Mr. Calcraft and his associates, done any injury to the theatre, persons of such over-grown fortunes would doubtless have made ample amends for whatever loss the proprietors might have sustained. There was, in short, a fatality in it, the current of which I could not stem.

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The following circumstance will likewise prove, that the same evil genius, or some other undiscoverable cause, usually prevented me from pursuing the path that led to my welfare. The rupture between the proprietors was now come to a crisis. This, as I was informed, rendered it necessary for Mr. Colman to get a paper signed by the performers, expressing their approbation of his management, and containing an acquiescence to be guided by his direction.

This paper the manager brought to me, and desired I would sign it. Upon which I frankly told him, that as I was engaged to *all four* of the proprietors, it did not appear to me, at first sight, to be prudent to sign any paper giving one a preference over the others. To which he replied, that as by the articles which subsisted between him and the other proprietors, he was allowed to be the only *acting manager*, he could see no impropriety in my signing a paper which merely related to that right. He then added, that he was so well assured I should, upon due reflection, be of his way of thinking, that he would leave the paper with me, and eat a chop with me the next day.

Mr. Colman was scarcely gone, before Mr. Rutherford and Mr. Woodward came in; and, I have some reason to think, on the same business; as the former immediately exclaimed, "have you signed it?" Upon my answering in the negative, but acknowledging that the paper was left with me for my consideration, Mr. Rutherford wanted me to shew it to him. This I absolutely refused to do; saying, I wondered any gentleman who professed liberal sentiments could advise a breach of trust. He told me that if he had got hold of it, he would have burnt it, as he was sure two capital performers had signed it, who would not have done so, had another paper been presented in their favour. Upon which I repeated what I had said before; adding, that I thought it, though trifling in itself, a breach of trust; and it therefore became an indispensable duty for me to keep it unseen. As soon as I had said this, Mr. Rutherford went away in anger.

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Mr. Woodward remained behind, and made use of every argument to dissuade me from signing it. He dwelt particularly upon the ill treatment I had received from Mr. Colman. This, however, I ought to have attributed to Powell, not Colman. But at length tired out with Mr. Woodward's solicitations, urged by my gratitude to him, and instigated by my usual indiscretion, I consented to his request. I accordingly sent back the paper to Mr. Colman, with a card inclosed, acquainting him that I desired to decline signing it; but hoped my refusal would not prevent me the favour of his company, agreeable to his own invitation. That gentleman, however, took no notice of my card, and from that time we became totally strangers.

Thus was I once more over-persuaded, contrary to my own judgment, to pursue a measure, which, as will be seen in the sequel, turned out to be the most detrimental to my interest I could have chosen.—But the following unlucky incident will serve to prove more strongly than either of the foregoing, that I am no favourite of Madam Fortune's. A combination of circumstances conspired to blast my long encouraged hopes in the moment of completion, and furnishes another proof, among the many I have already given, of the truth of \* Hamlet's assertion, that

"There's a divinity that shapes our ends,

"Rough-hew them how we will."

Of About the conclusion of this season, Mr. Powell came flushed into the Green Room one evening, and informed me, that Mr. Bentley and he had dined at Lord Tyrawley's, where Miss Nancy O'Hara, who was his professed admirer, had mentioned in conversation, that I should soon have a considerable legacy left me, Lady Tyrawley being very ill. I usually had a summons every evening to wait upon her ladyship, and upon my returning home, I accordingly found one, requesting that I would go to Somerset-house; but being much indisposed from a vio-

\* Hamlet, A & V. Scene II.



lent cold, and greatly fatigued, as I had that night played Alicia, impelled by the same wayward destiny that had so often directed my determinations, I resolved to postpone my visit till the morning.

I did so; and about nine o'clock received a note from her ladyship's woman, informing me that her mistress had died at three that morning. She added, that his lordship had come at five, when he locked himself up, and after having examined all her ladyship's papers, had gone away, leaving strict orders with her not to have any communication whatsoever with *me*, upon pain of his displeasure. His Lordship gave as a reason for this restriction, that he had found, during his rummage, a letter of mine, which had convinced him of what he had once doubted, of my having encouraged her ladyship to refuse his request, relative to cutting off the entail of an estate.

This, like many other of my imputed faults, originated from a mistake.—Indeed, most of the actions of my life have been in the same manner perverted; by which means I have been loaded with censures that I do not really deserve.—Errors enough I know I have been guilty of, but these have been so multiplied and misrepresented, that it is become necessary for me to lay a true statement of them before you and the world.—To know that your friendship has not been lessened by these misrepresentations, is one of the greatest blessings I at present enjoy.—I am sorry to say, that I fear the world too much delights in scandal, for me to hope that my conduct has been viewed by them in the same favourable light.—I will, however, trust that these prejudices are not irremovable.—I will hope that when the account I am now employed on, reaches the public, it will be received with the same candour and kindness, with which my attempts to gain their favour in my theatrical profession were once rewarded.

But to return to his Lordship.—I think I informed you in one of the preceding letters, that Lord Tyrawley's private marriage with his lady, prevented him from receiving the fortune he expected to have with her. Instead of which, when the separation between them took

place, he was obliged to allow her a handsome income as his wife. His lordship likewise put her in possession of the apartments, plate, &c. &c. which *my* mother abdicated upon her quarrel with him, as related in the early part of my history.

Upon the death of Lord Blessington's son, Lady Tyrawley, and her brother the noble Earl, were the only persons in the entail of the family estate. Lord Tyrawley being at that time much distressed, from having a young family *laid* to him, which, in all probability he *could* have no right to, he applied to his lady to join in cutting off the reversion, that he might be able to dispose of it.

I have already acquainted you with most of the particulars of that application from his lordship, and of the letters which passed between them upon the occasion, but some continuation is now necessary. At the time this happened, I was at Hollwood. Her ladyship sent me her husband's first letter, and *seemed* by the conclusion of her own to say, that she was determined to refuse his lordship's request; as she meant every thing she had to leave, as an addition to my daughter's fortune. I answered her ladyship's letter, thanking her in the strongest terms for her friendship; and, without any explanation, said, I *send* the inclosed; whereas I ought to have distinguished it by saying, I *return*, &c. In this state my letter was found at Somerley-house, and my good patron, friend, father, or lord, seemed to believe from it, that his wife's refusal proceeded from my advice. I was thus considered as guilty, and immediately condemned at his house in Leicester-fields, where the family were no friends to me. No will was brought forth; and I never saw his lordship after, but once in the Green-room, and at his own house, when he was first confined by the disorder which carried him off.

Have I not reason, think you, to complain once more of the unkind attacks of fortune? Was it possible to suppose that such untoward circumstances would have stepped between me and my hopes, so well-founded as they were? Yet why should I expect stability in that wheel,  
which

which from my earliest years, as you have seen, has been subject to sudden and unexpected revolutions. So often have occasions presented themselves for making this remark, that I really fear they begin to appear tiresome repetitions.—May not however these disappointments have been intended by the all-wise Disposer of events, to promote my real good!—That great moralist Shakespeare\*, speaking of the blindness of mortals in their wishes, tells us, that

“ We ignorant of ourselves,  
 “ Beg often our own harms; which the wise powers  
 “ Deny us for our good: so find we profit  
 “ By losing of our prayers.”

Let me then indulge the thought; and endeavour to dispel the gloom, which, when viewed in another light, they cast over the mind.

When Lord Tyrawley was taken ill, led by that respect and affection which I had always entertained for his Lordship, I went to pay my duty to him. Upon my entrance, I had the mortification to be repulsed by a domestic, who told me that Miss O'Hara knew my sensibility to be too great to bear the sight of so conspicuous a character, when degenerated into idiotism, and the † conversation I had with her during the masquerade in “ Man and Wife,” the last time she saw me on the stage, had convinced her that I could not possibly have any passion but contempt for her. She therefore would not give me the trouble of an interview, with a person to whom I had shewn so many marks of dislike.

I found all my passions awakened by this insulting message; and forced my way, in spite of every opposition, into his Lordship's apartment. But how shall I describe the melancholy spectacle which there presented itself! My heart bleeds at the very recollection of it. There alas! I beheld that great man, who had shone, brightly

\* Antony and Cleopatra, A& II. Scene I.

† During the masquerade, I reproached her as she sat in the stage-box, for her partiality to one of the performers.



shone, both in the field and cabinet ; “ for when a soldier “ was the theme, his name was not far off ; ” who had with honour filled places of the highest trust and confidence, and had been one of the first ornaments of this country, sunk into a state of debility and idiotism. His Lordship was sitting up in his bed, wrapped in a scarlet gown. His eyes were sunk ; his tongue was lolling out on one side of his mouth ; and he appeared to be counting his fingers.—Heavens ! what a sad reverse !

With a heart bursting with fondness and grief, I knelt down by the side of the bed, and taking hold of one of his hands, bathed it with my tears. I then fervently kissed it, in hopes that would draw his attention towards me, and cause him to recollect me.—Instead of which, after some time, he whispered, “ Send Aby,” “ I want “ Aby.” “ Why does not Aby come ? ” meaning Aby Fisher. Hearing him thus speak with some degree of rationality, I requested that he would look upon me ; and said every thing that I thought would revive his recollection—but, ah ! in vain.

Hearing only the same discordant notes repeated from those lips, whose every sound was once harmony to my ears, I quitted the room, shocked beyond measure with the sight I had beheld ; a sight which recalled to my memory the similarity of his Lordship’s situation with that of his *great General*, who had taught him the way to glory, and who had experienced like him a second childhood.

As I went to my chair, I was told by an old domestic, that the ungrateful young man he had called for, who had been fostered by his Lordship’s humanity, after having been introduced, when an infant, in a basket, or by some other unaccountable means, from the gate of his Lordship’s house at Blackheath, now even refused to give his patron the only pleasure he was capable of receiving, that of *seeing* him play upon the violin ; for, as his Lordship was totally bereft of the sense of hearing, consequently his talents, as to *sound*, were useless.

Nay so far had his Lordship’s partiality for him gained ground, that having, after some time, recovered a ray of reason, he informed his son, the present gallant General,

neral, or else directed Miss O'Hara to acquaint him, that he must provide himself with a lodging, as Mr. Fisher, (the present amiable Doctor) could not be dislodged.— Thus are nature, and every tender innate feeling, deadened, if not totally destroyed, by the designing, dissipated, ungenerous person, who continually is in the presence of the declining invalid, and which generally ends in obtaining a perfect command.

G. A. B.

## LETTER LXXXVIII.

Nov. 23, 17—

**M**Y visit to Lord Tyrawley had so great an effect upon my mind, that I was immediately attacked with a disorder which carried with it a probability of proving fatal; and it certainly would have done so, had I been called by the prints to the theatre, and been unable to have done my duty there: But Mr. Colman prevented me from experiencing so mortifying a trial, by introducing, at the beginning of this season, (the second of my present articles) a young woman named Miller.

This person had nothing to recommend her but the acting manager's favour, a circumstance which plainly evinces the unlimited power of gentlemen in that department; who we see, from this instance, can dare to *foist* upon the public *any being* for whom they may have conceived a partiality, or whom they intend to set up as a mark of resentment against another performer. Had I now possessed the same spirit I did when the pretty Cordelia appeared, who indeed had youth and elegance to boast of, the manager might not have found the task he had undertaken so easy as he did; but my silence upon the occasion, which proceeded from a consciousness of indiscretion, and the constant disappointment of my hopes, made my passiveness appear the effect of indispotion; consequently this *puppet* was permitted to go on, though a very, very indifferent substitute.

When the benefits came to be settled, my illness obliged me to fix upon a piece in which I could appear without much exertion. Andromache, in "The Distress

"Mother," seemed as suitable as any, that play being esteemed the strongest in the company; Mr. Powell playing Orestes, Mrs. Yates, Hermione, and myself Andromache. Having never been accustomed to *ask* as a favour, what I imagined I had a right to *expect*, I did not apply to Mrs. Yates to perform her part; as she had lately played it, I had no apprehension of her not doing it now. What the custom might be at present, I am unacquainted with; but at that time it was unusual to *request* a performer's appearance, unless a new part was to be studied.

However, upon the play being advertised, I received a note from the intended Helen's daughter, in a high stile indeed; to this I replied; and, in a few days, I was not a little surprised to see the dejected Trojan Queen's correspondence with the beautiful Grecian Princess, in the public papers. I am sure Mrs. Yates's behaviour upon this occasion, must have been the consequence of some misrepresentation, as I have since had the strongest instances of this lady's humanity and proffered civility, which indeed I could have no possible right to expect.

When this affair became public, my good friend, her Grace of Queensberry, sent for me to enquire what could occasion such a rupture. I told her Grace that I was totally ignorant of the cause, but was concerned at the loss of so capital a performer, let it proceed from what cause it would. She answered that it was very immaterial as to the boxes; for my avowed patroness, her sister Douglas, (an assumed title for the Duchess) who had been some time in town, but could not appear in public till the great cause then pending was determined, had requested her to take care of my benefit. "As if," continued her Grace, "I wanted Peg's recommendation to 'patronize you!'" Then looking very significantly, she said, "I suppose you recollect I was one of the first that 'noticed you?'" I replied, she had done me that honour. "It was an honour," added she, "and a very great one, if you knew all; for I not only then gave you good advice, but have only been once at a play since I found you did not follow that advice." I coloured;



loured; which her Grace perceiving, she immediately turned the discourse, and began to consult what piece I should have.

Just at that instant her Grace of Douglas was announced. Next to sincerity, gratitude is the most susceptible feeling of my heart. My sensations, therefore, at hearing that revered name, are scarcely to be conceived or described. I believe Penelope was not more happy in meeting her long-lost Ulysses; nor Achilles his Patroclus; or, to bring the comparison nearer home, a fond love-sick girl to see the object of her affections, than I was to meet this best of women; whose every little civility seemed to contain so much good-nature, with such sincere marks of regard, that they made an impression which can never be eradicated from my mind.

Upon this lady's entrance, her copartner in the tambour accosted her with, "I am glad you are come. How go "affairs on in the House of Lords?" To which interrogation the visitor replied, "That she had the greatest reason to hope for success, as well from the justice of the cause, as from the equity of the court before which it was; whose decisions were so judicious, that they were scarcely ever repined at, even by those who lost what they contended for."

"Well!" returned her Grace of Queensberry; "you must now decide what is to be done in the court of "Covent-Garden, upon the second or third of April. "Your Queen of Troy is left alone; for the Grecian "Princess has declared that she shall meet her Hector "on the other side of the Stygian Lake, before she will "assist her." The universal laugh which this droll speech excited, was greatly increased by the inflexibility of the lady's countenance. As soon as the laughter was subsided, her Grace remarked, that notwithstanding the pleasantry which had just passed, the determination was of as much importance to *me*, as that of the great Douglas cause was to them, as I played under a letter of licence, and had nothing to support me but the produce of my benefit.

"Romeo and Juliet," "Venice Preserved," and "Cleone," were severally proposed, and all rejected, from my not being able to sustain my characters in them, through the weakness I was labouring under; at last her Grace concluded, assuming at the same time an air of as much importance as if she had found out a method to pay off the national debt, that it must be the "Albion Queens." She thought, she said, upon recollection, that I was like Mary, Queen of Scots.

The latter part of the Duchess's speech overwhelmed me with confusion; when her Grace, laughing, said, she was glad to see, that after having been so many years in public, keeping such *sine* company, and having travelled so much, I betrayed such evident marks of modesty. The Duchess of Douglas chid her Grace, who certainly possessed the most feeling heart, notwithstanding it was contained in so rude a mould: Upon which she replied, "I suppose it will be a matter of pleasure, instead of mortification, when I inform Bellamy, that I have always enquired after her."—I bowed; the play was fixed on; and I very gladly took my leave.

I have already given you my sentiments upon her Grace's behaviour, and that at a time I was smarting under the lashes received at a former visit; I shall therefore only say here, that though I was sensible of the honour of being admitted to Queensberry-House, which was always attended with pecuniary advantages even beyond my expectations, yet I would very willingly have declined the honour, and even these advantages, could I have done it without the imputation of disrespect and ingratitude, as I was sure of meeting with some sarcasm, which in a manner destroyed the benefit. Her Grace of Douglas engaged me to breakfast the next day, where, *tout à car-traire*, I met with the most agreeable reception that real cordiality, unmixed with caprice, can bestow.

At length the day of my benefit came. The Douglas Cause was decided that day in their favour, to the very great mortification of the house of Hamilton. When my two patronesses appeared, the applause was great, but, upon the young gentleman's entering, it increased; and the Duchess of Douglass making more courtesies upon the

the occasion than her companion thought needful, she leaned over the young gentleman who sat between them, and cried out, "Sit down, Peg!" This had such an effect upon me, who stood on the same side, ready to make my appearance, that I burst into such a fit of laughter as prevented me from going on immediately: as I ought to have done. But this was not all. Her Grace being in high good-humour, she kept calling out, occasionally, loud enough for me to hear, "Well said, Mary!" "Bravo, Mary!" which, united with the former, was very near turning the sad story we were acting, into a Tragi-Comedy; for it was with the greatest difficulty I could keep my risible faculties in any decorum.

At the conclusion of the season I found that it had turned out a very beneficial one. This arose not only from the patronage of the ladies already mentioned, and many others, but it received some addition from the generosity of an unexpected benefactor; of which, though truly ridiculous in itself, I am tempted to give you the particulars, as perhaps they may have the same effect upon your muscles, as the Duchess of Queensberry's *verbal* applause had upon mine.

An old gouty Knight, Banker, and Alderman, had entertained a partiality for me; as his lady was an elegant and accomplished woman, and in possession of youth as well as a fortune, it is really to be wondered at that she should have sacrificed herself to waning age and disease, merely for the sake of a title; but my old friend verified the adage of "*Tout jour perdri, ne vaut rien.*" He had sent me at my benefit an extraordinary present; and as his honour was not accustomed to do generous deeds, I might naturally have supposed that I was not to place it to the score either of humanity or liberality.

He accordingly called some days after, when he was informed that I was not at home; but suspecting the veracity of my servant, he went to some little distance, and ordered the house to be watched. In a short time after I went out, and whether his mercury had not readily found him, or his corpulence had curbed his activity, I cannot say, but he did not overtake my chair till I had reached Leicester-House.

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I there heard a voice, seemingly of a person out of breath, cry, "Stop, chairmen, stop." The two-legged poneys, however, continued their trot; at last a man, in a horseman's coat, came up to the side of the chair, and, in an imperative tone, commanded the chairmen to sit down; he at the same time knocked at the side-window. I was greatly alarmed, and experienced perturbations for which I can no otherwise account, that from the uncommonness of the circumstance; I notwithstanding did as I was ordered; when, to my inexpressible surprise, I beheld my impassioned elder, who seemed to me to have broke his wind to shew his gallantry.

As he could not immediately speak, I asked him, repeatedly, what was the occasion of such madness? Upon which, unbuttoning his *furtout*, not only to recover breath, but to dazzle me with the gold lace upon his coat, wisely judging, that as a woman I must be captivated by finery, he in a panting voice told me, he had given me a substantial proof of his affection at my benefit, besides thirty pounds, the balance of a former debt for money borrowed upon my jewels, and which he had never demanded.

Hearing this uncommon salutation, I desired my panting lover, in a very resolute tone, to go about his business; for, if he did not, I would inform his *young* lady of his depravity and folly. I then told him, that if ever he presumed, upon any account, to take such a liberty with me again, I was not so friendless, but that some person would interest themselves in my cause, and punish his insolence.

I had no sooner said this, than in an instant away my gentleman went; and notwithstanding I had been heartily frightened at his approach, yet to see the short squab skuttling away as if he had crackers at his tail, presented such a ridiculous scene, that I could not help bursting into an immoderate fit of laughter. In this I was joined by the very chairmen, who had heard the curious conversation, and had reconnoitred my Turtle-eater; so that it was some moments before they could take up their burthen, that is, their chair; for as for myself, I was reduced to my original *gossamer*.

I afterwards

I afterwards mentioned the incident to one of his lady's intimates; she was highly entertained with it, and declared, she would make her friend acquainted with it. She at the same time informed me, that this flower of gallantry, at home, appeared to be the most docile and fond help-mate she ever knew.

I never heard any more from or of this mirror of knighthood, till I read in the news-papers, some short time after, that he had made his *entrée* into the family vault; and I much fear the proof he gave of his activity upon the above-mentioned occasion, sent him some years sooner to his long home, than if he had acted the part of a sober citizen, and the discreet father of a numerous family; and I am the more induced to draw this conclusion, from its being announced that his death was occasioned by an asthma, which proved fatal from the breaking of a blood-vessel.

Not long after, Mrs. Smith, a relation of the knight, (whom I have more than once mentioned) came to put me in mind of the thirty pounds I stood indebted to him, lest it should be demanded at an inconvenient time. As she informed me of his death, she accompanied the information with tears, the common tribute paid to a *worthy* cousin. Seeing which, I could not help telling her of his gallant attack upon me. As she was a pattern of virtue herself, she no sooner received the intelligence, than she wiped away the pearly drops, and had recourse to the other female weapon, by which she forcibly proved her inveterate abhorrence of connubial infidelity.

As I know not that I shall be able to terminate this letter with a more memorable incident than the foregoing, I will do so, ere the smile has left your face; for I am sure even my lifeless representation of it must have raised that pleasurable appearance on your lovely countenance. —What hilarity would it have afforded you, had you been a disinterested spectator of the laughable scene! —I have no doubt but you would have enjoyed it even in a higher degree than I did — Not even Shakespeare's fat knight, in any of the humorous distresses his wanton attacks on the dames of Windsor led him into, could furnish

nish you with a surer fund of mirth, than the amorous folly of my city knight would have done.

G. A. B.

LETTER LXXXIX.

Decem. 2, 17—

THE summer following, his majesty of Denmark visited England; when Mr. Garrick, who wanted performers, as all those belonging to the London theatres had by this time joined their several companies in their summer excursions, and none were to be collected upon the occasion but those at Richmond, made application to Mr. Woodward, and requested that he would ask me. I complied with great readiness, but upon condition that leave was obtained of the acting manager. Mr. Woodward thought this unnecessary, and said he intended applying to Mr. Harris, who would, no doubt, sign a liberty for me, at the same time he did for him.

The first piece we performed was the "Suspicious Husband," in which I played Clarinda. Upon my appearance there was one person hissed. As this was a salutation I was not acquainted with, I could not help receiving pain from it; but upon Mr. Garrick's saying it was apparent malice, as the general opinion was evidently for me, I composed myself, and played as well as I could.

"The Provoked Wife" was the second piece that we performed, in which I appeared in the character of Lady Fanciful. In the last Act, the person, whose business it was, not having called me, Mr. Garrick was just going to be witty upon the occasion, as you may recollect my worthy friend, Mr. Quin, was upon my non-appearance, from a very particular incident, many years before; but my entering just as he had advanced for that purpose, prevented his wit from being for that time made known; and I could never find out what occasion he would have fixed on to shew his satire.

I must here add, that the incidents may not be disunited, that the beginning of the next season, his Danish Majesty came to see "Jane Shore," at Covent-Garden, in



in which I played Alicia ; when observing the royal visitor to prefer the charms of Somnus to the Tragic Muse, and unwilling that he should lose the *fine acting* it might be supposed he came to see, I drew near to his box, and with a most violent exertion of voice, which the part admitted, cried out, " Oh ! thou false Lord ! " by which I so effectually roused his majesty, that he told the unfortunate Comte de Bathmore, (who, as I have already informed you, used to be a frequent visitor at my house) that he would not be married to a woman with such a bell voice, upon any account, as he should never expect to sleep.

This summer Mr. Powell died. The last time I ever saw him he requested my pardon, and assured me he would make atonement, the next winter, for the injury he had done me in my profession.

The concluding season of my agreement I was seldom called upon at the theatre ; and indeed the severe indisposition I had undergone, had left me so weak, that I should have executed my duty with great difficulty, as I always made it an invariable rule to play when called upon, were I able to rise ; nor did I ever engage persons to applaud me, or pay the doers of the papers to put in puffs to impose upon the public, under the signature of " Impartial Writers."

Now I am upon this subject, I will send you a specimen of the dependance that in general is to be placed on the accounts given in the papers by those sort of writers : Though it happened many years before the period I am upon, yet it will not be the less *a-propos* here.

During the memorable run of " Romeo and Juliet," at Drury-Lane, the late Sir John Hill, who had not at that time been knighted, was the Editor of a Newspaper ; I think it was called the " Inspector," but am not sure. In that paper, he did me the honour to be very lavish in my praise, for which I gave him credit, as I had not then the pleasure to know him.

Upon my return to Covent-Garden, he one evening swam into the Green-Room, during the representation of that play, and when I was called to go to the balcony, the scene on which he had been most exuberant in his eulogiums,

eulogiums, he greatly astonished me by saying, "I must go and see it, for I hear it is the finest piece of acting in the whole performance." I could not resist turning back, to ask him if he had not wrote a critique upon it? To which he replied, with a becoming *non chalance*, that he had written it from what he heard at the Bedford, and never till that evening had an opportunity of seeing it.

As "Romeo and Juliet," was a standing dish at both theatres, at that period, for two years running, it might be supposed that all the critiques of that gentleman; as well as the fraternity in general, were *equally* the result of observation and judgment. Indeed I believe most of the praise or censure we read in the papers, is put in by the partizans or enemies of the performers; except in new pieces, when the editors think it their duty to give the public, with an account of the performance, the merits or demerits of the actors and actresses.

Excuse this long digression. I will now return to my narrative.—This summer I was not only disengaged from the theatre, but from my employment at Comte Haslang's; which was occasioned by the following circumstance: I had borrowed, some time before, forty guineas of Mr. Woodward to pay his coal-merchant; for though I would not receive any pecuniary favours from that gentleman myself, I made no scruple to borrow of him to accommodate others. Mr. Woodward having now occasion for the money, and it not being in my power to repay it, I applied to the Comte for it. His Excellency told me he had not that sum by him, but referred me to Mrs Myers. You must know that this lady, who was the widow of his valet-de-chambre, had been his house-keeper, but at this period was translated to the high office of being his *gouvernante*; for as his Lordship was immersed in politics, the court, the club, and public places, he had not time to *manage himself*.

Being thus referred to her, I sent to speak with her in the anti-chamber, through which all the people of fashion pass to go to the chapel gallery. No pen can describe the ludicrous scene that passed upon the occasion; let it suffice to say, that the lady had no objection to a few oaths, and that she spoke plain English. At first it afforded di-

version

version to the gentlemen who happened to be passing through the room; but at last, provoked by some words I unfortunately let drop, she poured such a torrent of gross abuse upon her Lord and benefactor, that I took myself off; and at the same time took such an aversion to her, that I declined going to the house; nor did I ever officiate more.

I now determined to retire to my house at Strand on the Green, and wait the issue of whatever should happen. In a short time I received a visit from Mr. Cook, a gentleman belonging to a particular department in the theatre, who told me he was sorry to be the messenger of unwelcome news, but he came from Mr. Colman to inform me, that if I would accept of *six* pounds a week, he would engage me; if not, he should no longer look upon me as one of the company.

I could ill brook this message, as it was adding an insult to an affront. Had Mr. Colman sent me a discharge, it would have carried with it more of that candour by which his actions are generally guided; but as I had certainly treated that gentleman ill, I did not complain; conscious of my error, I hope he will forgive me when I declare, that I have shot my arrow o'er my head, which has recoiled and only hurt myself.

Mr. Harris called upon me that day, or the next, and seemed much hurt at the affair. He consoled me with the hopes of the suit being soon ended; when, he assured me, that I should be reinstated in my former situation.

A coolness had now taken place between Mr. Woodward, who boarded with me at Strand, and Mr. Hoole, about some advice the latter had given relative to a benefit. This was a severe stroke upon me, as it produced the same effect between the family and myself. My regard was sincere, and was increased by obligation.

I had bred up a near relation (a nephew) from an infant, in a manner which would be necessary to make him appear as a gentleman, in which line I had then reason to believe I should be able to maintain him. He was at Westminster, was placed in one of the first boarding-houses, and enabled to keep company with the principal boys in the school, not only for quality, but genius, to whom  
he



he seemed to give the preference. Among these, the Rev. Mr. Hayes, and Young Ford, son of Doctor Ford, both possessed of shining parts, were his particular intimates.

The alteration which had taken place in my circumstances rendered an alteration in his mode of education needful; I therefore wrote to my mother, when I was in Scotland, desiring to take him from Westminster, and place him where he might learn arithmetic; she accordingly did so, and I regularly sent the money to pay the expences. My young gentleman's pride was much hurt by this arrangement; but as Mr. Woodward had taken him to live at chambers with him, and indulged him in what he thought requisite, we never came to an explanation till the last winter.

I then informed him that I had found a capital house in the city that was willing to receive him; to which he replied, with all the consequence that would have become a Duke had he been insulted, that I might have saved myself the trouble, for I had bred him as a gentleman, and should support him as such; his insolence aggravating me, I asked him, with a supercilious smile, why he did not fly, and request the interest of his school-fellow, Sir Watkyn-Williams Wynne, of whose acquaintance he boasted so much? His answer was, before he would be a wretched dependent upon any man on earth, he would wait till he was of age to be enlisted, and prefer carrying a musquet.

The spirit of the boy pleased me, and from that hour I resolved not to curb it; he was a great favourite in Mr. Hoole's family, and as that gentleman is possessed of one of the best of hearts, in addition to his other qualifications, it was not long before he obtained for my nephew a brevet in the honourable the East-India Company's service at Bombay.

The difficulty was how to fit him out; as my finances were but in an indifferent situation, I was obliged to try my credit, and failing in that, to the amount of about eighty or ninety pounds, I applied to Mr. Woodward, who said he would advance the money upon *his* bond; as he

he well knew, though a minor, his principles and honour were such as he could depend upon.

My worthy friend Mr. Hoole now introduced him to a gentleman of the India-House, named Corbet; who not only lent him twelve guineas, but spoke to a Captain in his favour, and shewed him uncommon civilities; besides this testimony of friendship, I was indebted to Mr. Hoole the sum of forty pounds, which I am sorry to say still remains unpaid. These circumstances undoubtedly made me feel this coolness more severely than otherwise I should have done, and I do not know that any deprivation of seeing real friends ever gave me such sensible pain.

But these revolutions in friendship are, I see, as certain and unavoidable, as the common vicissitudes in all human affairs. Even those which appear to be the firmest founded, which have a similarity of sentiment and disposition for their basis, are not sometimes proof against the feeblest blasts of discord.—How finely has my immortal poet described this frailty, and confirmed the foregoing observation\*!

“ Oh! world, thy slippery turns! friends now fast sworn,

“ Whose double bosoms seem to wear one heart,

“ Whose hours, whose bed, whose meal, and exercise,

“ Are still together; who twine, as ’twere, in love

“ Unseparable; shall within this hour,

“ On a dissention of a doit, break out

“ To bitter enmity.”

At the conclusion of the summer, Mr. Woodward engaged with his former opponent, Foote, to go to Scotland, and to play during the summer at the little theatre. As I had now no business to call me to town, I determined to remain at Strand, and divert myself with books, birds, and writing. I began a comedy; but unfortunately, Thalia had no sooner honoured me with a visit, than she was obliged suddenly to decamp, upon ac-

\* Coriolanus, Act IV. Scene III.

count of the return of a far more disagreeable visitant; the pain in my side; a guest with whose intrusions I had long been troubled, and of whom, notwithstanding all my endeavours, I could not totally get rid. This obliged me to come to town, as I had no opinion of any of the physical gentlemen but Mr. Adair, to whose skill and unremitting attention I have been frequently indebted.

I had now no dependance but on Comte Haslang's promised friendship, and a few jewels, the reliëts of Miss Meredith's legacy, the very thoughts of parting from which, almost broke my heart; notwithstanding this, I wrote to a lady, without considering her taste for expence, and the contracted state of my finances, to procure me a lodging for a few weeks, for myself and one maid-servant. Accordingly I set off the next day, leaving the cook, gardener, and footman, to take care of my treasure at Strand.

At the time Mr. Woodward first made the proposal to board with me, he had laid in wine, coals, and candles, &c. &c. and insisted (as he had engaged for a year, and as he hoped I would permit him to return in the summer) upon paying the whole sum he had agreed for, notwithstanding his absence. All false punctilio ceased upon this occasion; and, when he set off for Scotland, he left me the quarter's money, together with all his writings, in a strong box.

Being unwilling to hazard a deposit of such importance in the country whilst I was away, I took this box with me to town; and finding a ray of my usual presentiment cross my mind just as I arrived in London, I instantly determined that I would not take it to Mrs. Moore's, (the Lady I had wrote to) though she lived in stile, and kept a number of servants; I therefore stopt at Mr. Colley's, in Grosvenor-street, and left it providentially in his care.

When I arrived in South Audley-street, I found Mrs. Moore extremely ill, lying upon a couch in her dressing-room, which was towards the street, her best rooms being backwards. She informed me, that her woman had taken a lodging for me, agreeable to my request; and that it was in Leicester-street, at two guineas a week. This intelligence startled me, as I was mistress of but nine guineas;



neas; and those were all I was certain of, till I should receive Mr. Woodward's quarter at Christmas.

Mrs. Moore insisted upon my staying the night; and indeed, her illness induced me to do this, as she would not suffer any body to sit up with her; and her bed was one of the daughters of *the bed of Ware*. You know supper is my only meal; therefore, when the lady retired to her repose, I had the cloth laid, and a nobleman, who had called in upon a visit, walked about the room while I ate it. About twelve, his Lordship left me. Upon hearing a loud knock at the door, immediately after, I rang, to enquire what occasioned it; when the butler informed me, that the noble visitor had met some ill-looking fellows at the corner of the street, who, upon his telling them he feared they were upon no good, one replied, "Go home, my Lord, and be satisfied there is no harm intended you." This induced his Lordship to return, in order to take a stick he had seen in the hall, as he passed through it, by way of defence.

As I generally read till I am sleepy, I took up a book with me into the bed-chamber, and employed myself in that manner till I heard the clock strike two. I then went into bed; and I had not been laid down five minutes, before I heard a great noise in the house. Very fortunately for me this happened after I was undressed, otherwise I should have gone to have checked the servants for disturbing their lady, at a time when she was so much indisposed. This was a liberty I should have taken at the house even of a common acquaintance, and much more here, where I could be as free as in my own.

In a moment I heard the door of our chamber open, and perceived a great glare of light; upon which Mrs. Moore started up, and said, "Mary! Mary!" imagining it to be her maid; when we instantly heard a horrid deep voice, crying, "Lie still, or I will murder you." Another exclamation of the same nature succeeded, and so on to a sixth. In short, there was such a climax of murderous threats, that I verily believe they had studied their lessons to aggravate our fears.

They now set about ransacking the drawers, and employed themselves in packing up every thing that was portable.

table. As the room looked into the garden, and from its largeness could contain many chests, they had leisure to continue this employment for a full hour, when they retired. You may be sure we lay still and mute during the whole of this transaction; and we were now in hopes that we had got rid of our dreadful visitors.

We were, however, mistaken; for one of them immediately returned, with a light in one hand and a pistol in the other, and drew back the curtain. Mrs. Moore now, for the first time, broke silence, crying, "You will not murder us!" The wretch seemed to deliberate a good while before he answered. At length, after a long pause, he replied, "No." Upon which my companion continued, "Nor will you murder any of those who belong to me, will you?" To this he returned, without any hesitation, "No." At that instant a watchman's rattle was heard, when the fellow threw down his pistol and ran away. Though I had heard distinctly all that past, I had not seen any of these manœuvres; for, in my fright, I had crept down to the bottom of the bed, where I lay more dead than alive; but upon the fellow's retiring, I re-assumed my place upon my pillow.

The means by which the ruffians had been disturbed, were as follow: The housekeeper lay in the front garret; and having captivated the butler, he had opened his trenches in an honourable way before her: hearing the noise, she imagined it was her enamorado, who, having got a glass too much, which was sometimes the case, was blundering up to her room. This inducing her to look over the balusters, as it was a well stair-case, she saw the troop of thieves, each with a light and a pistol, enter her lady's room. Seeing this, she went into the balcony, where she waited till the watchman came his rounds, and then gave the alarm.

The watchman observed, that the lamp had been taken out of the glass globe at the door, and that the window over it was open; this had been left so by the carelessness of the house-maid: as soon as the watchman observed this, he made use of his rattle, which so frightened the fellows, that dropping their booty, they each shifted for himself. The man who had returned to our room, find-  
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ing himself alone, made his way into the garden, and leapt into the next area; where, after hiding some trinkets which he had secreted from his associates, he was taken by Colonel Sloper's servants.

Being delivered by them to the watchmen, who by this time were assembled in a considerable body, on promise of lenity, he gave information where his companions were to be met with, and five more of them were taken. Two others, who had been left as a guard over Mrs. Moore's men servants, by being near the garden, had found means to make their escape. One of these two, whilst he was securing the butler, informed him, that one of the gang wanted to stab the nobleman as he went out; but a youth who was but just returned from transportation, and had only joined them that day, had objected to their committing murder. The butler hearing his mistress just then scream, he said to the same man, "I hope they are not murdering my mistress!" To which the fellow replied, "I hope so too; but one of them is a bloody dog, and had I money to go abroad, I would leave them." This he probably did, as he was one of those who had made their escape, and has not been heard of since.

In the morning, all the six were brought for Mrs. Moore to swear to the person that had come with the pistol to her bed-side. Upon seeing them, she fixed on the youth before-mentioned, who was quite an agreeable lad. As she was about to take the oath, he told her to be cautious of what she was going to do, as an oath was a very *sacred* business: an admonition, which, as it came from one of that calling, seemed to astonish all present. As for myself, I was not at Mrs. Moore's when the cavalcade arrived; for I no sooner heard of their approach, than I ran over to the Neapolitan ambassador's, where I remained till they were gone. Though I needed not to have been afraid of being called upon, as my testimony could have been of no manner of use, from my having played least in sight.

To make short of my story, which I fear you think already too long, five of the wretches who had occasioned our fright were executed, and the youth in whose behalf  
some



some favourable circumstances appeared, was once more transported. What made his case the more pitiable was, that he belonged to a family of some opulence and credit. I have since been informed, that his sister at that very time rode in her coach and six.

It will be necessary, that I should just acquaint you with the circumstances which occasioned this robbery, as they too often arise from similar imprudences. Mrs. Moore's butler had been sent into the city to receive a considerable sum of money, which he had deposited in a canvas bag. As the amount was all in gold, except one thirty pound note, it made a figure. Before he got home, he called at a public-house in the neighbourhood for a pint of porter. Whether he was really tired of his load, or from a motive of ostentation to shew his treasure, he set the bag that contained it upon the table. One of the fellows, who afterwards broke into his mistress's house, happening to set near him, upon observing the butler's load, asked him, with an appearance of surprise, whether that was all gold? To which the butler *wisely* replied in the affirmative; and not content with this, opened the bag to convince him. From that hour the house was watched; and on the Sunday night following, the very night my ill fate drove me to sleep there, they found means to effect their purposes.

Your wicked wits have said, in ridicule to our sex, that a woman's postscript is generally longer than the letter itself: I think I stand some chance of incurring the same reflection for my story-telling; the additions seeming likely to be more prolix than the story itself, prolix as it has been. I cannot, however, help giving you an instance of insensibility it produced, which is as extraordinary as any I ever heard of.

The nobleman who had fallen in with the thieves the night of the robbery, went to Newgate to see them; when the youth I have been speaking of, accosted his Lordship, and, with as much unconcern as if he had been an indifferent person, said, "If you please, my Lord, I will shew you the felons." And upon his Lordship's enquiring of him, why they did not rob him, as they had so favourable an opportunity? he told him, there

there were two reasons for it; the one was, because they had better game in view, as they always preferred waiting upon the ladies to the gentlemen; and the other was, that officers in the guards, (you must observe that his Lordship was personally known by them) were said to have so many calls for their money, that they seldom carried much about them; so that the attack would have been attended with certain danger, and an uncertain profit, which it would have been imprudent to hazard.

When the news of the robbery was spread abroad, the house was like a fair. I therefore took my leave of Mrs. Moore, on the Monday evening, and went to my new lodgings; for I really believed I could never have slept in the house, had I continued in it for ever.

To what an immoderate length has this robbery obliged me to extend my present letter! for it would have left your curiosity in a disagreeable suspense, had I, "like Butler's story of the Bear and Fiddle, began—and broke off in the middle." Could I have foreseen, when I first entered upon it, that it would have so much exceeded my usual bounds, I believe I should have totally omitted it.—But as I was, though the greatest part of the time, an *invisible* performer, so capital a one in the piece; and the impression made on my mind by the shocking representation will never be eradicated, I could not pass it over in silence.

## LETTER XC.

Dec. 15, 1779—

**W**HEN I got to my new lodgings, I found that my maid who had come up in the stage, was arrived there, and had brought the things I should want. Unluckily for me in the present state of my finances, the person that kept the house had been accustomed to provide every necessary for her lodgers. This, however, was convenient for me, as my hand-maid, who was pretty, for you know I cannot be satisfied if those about me are only passible, could do little else but dress me and work at her needle. I therefore was obliged to accept of her

proffered service, though it was attended with an extraordinary expence.

His excellency Comte Haslang now sent me the money he had promised me; and which I had almost given over, as there were three months due. Mr. Woodward hearing of the robbery, sent me immediately a draft upon a printer in Fleet-street, whose name I have forgot. As I was too ill to go with it myself, I sent to Strand for my foot-boy to come to town, for I found it inconvenient to be without him; and my kind landlady offered me a bed for him, in such a manner, that I understood it was to be gratis.

When he came to town, I sent him with the bill for acceptance. As he was going into the city for this purpose, attracted by the warbling of a syren in Leicester-fields, he stood among a group of gaping auditors to listen; when one of the nimble-fingered gentry eased him of his handkerchief, and at the same time of the bill, which the wise-acre had carefully tied up in the corner of it. In consequence of this loss he was afraid to return. Wondering what could detain him, I was not a little uneasy; not from any apprehension of my treasure, you know me too well to suppose that could give me a moment's uneasiness, but from my servant's being a country lad, and totally unacquainted with the city. He, however, at length came home, and with a long face told me his piteous tale; upon which I thought it necessary to send a note to the person on whom the bill was drawn, to acquaint him of the accident; and whether the thief was apprehensive of presenting it, or saw the lad coming out, I cannot say, but it was never heard of more. Luckily I did not just at that time stand in need of the money.

My health being re-established by the assistance of my worthy friend Mr. Adair, I went frequently to my house at Strand, where the inhabitants are mostly fishermen. My honest neighbours expressed the greatest satisfaction whenever they saw me; and as even seeming regard is pleasing, though from strangers, and the residence where you suppose yourself loved, always has the preference, I chose to spend my Christmas there. When I came to reflect



reflect on the narrow escape Mr. Woodward's box of writings had met with, I could not but congratulate myself on my having deposited them in a place of safety. Had they been lost, I should never have forgiven myself; though no blame could have been imputed to me, as a trust of such consequence would have affected me infinitely more than if it had been my own.

I had at this time frequent visits from Mr. Harris, and sometimes from Mr. Lake, who had purchased a part of Mr. Rutherford's share, as he had been obliged to dispose of his fourth. In these interviews, I was assured, that no reconciliation should take place without my being made a party. I soon found London too expensive for me; I therefore discharged my lodging, and returned to take up my abode entirely in my little rural residence. I soon found, that I could live infinitely cheaper there than in Leicester-street. For the good lady whose apartments had been taken for me, having been accustomed to good lodgers and good living, to shew her taste, generally provided enough to serve the whole family, company and all; notwithstanding I every day sent down word that I never eat but of one dish. This was attended with an expence I could by no means afford; and not being able to shut my ears any longer to the whispers of prudence, I determined on a removal.

Though I thus lived in retirement and solitude, not a moment passed without some employment, for it is that alone which can make life supportable. How have I been surprised to hear people complaining of times hanging heavy on their hands!—For my own part, I have often, very often, “chid the hasty-footed time” for flying so fast.—The complaints of having nothing to do, is such a vulgarism, that I wonder any persons, who make the least pretence to feeling, can degrade themselves by the acknowledgment.—Thus beautifully has my much-regretted friend Thomson\*, painted the state of those who truly enjoy life.

\* Thomson's Spring, Line 1138.

- “ An elegant sufficiency, content,
- “ Retirement, rural quiet, friendship, books,
- “ *Ease and alternate labour, useful life,*
- “ Progressive virtue, and approving Heaven,

This is a just sketch of the supremest happiness this sublunary state will admit of; unless every hour be employed in some useful concern, or innocent amusement, life cannot be said to be enjoyed.—The idle only exist; the busy live.

About this period, I received a note from Mr. Foote, who was lately returned from Scotland, informing me, that he had left Mr. Woodward well, and had taken for him a house, near his own, at Little Chelsea. He desired I would go look at it, and get it in readiness for his reception at his return, which would be in a month or six weeks. He then requested to see me, as his theatre was ready to receive me; which he would do with open arms, should an engagement be agreeable to me.

I accordingly went to see the house, but found it only a hovel, and very inconvenient, but for a person who had another habitation, and kept this only to save appearances. As I was sensible there could be no duplicity in Mr. Woodward's character, yet as, at the same time, I knew he could not be without the assistance of persons of the faculty, I declined having any thing to do in the affair. In the same letter which conveyed to Mr. Foote my sentiments on that head, I thanked him for his kind offer, but told him that neither my health nor spirits would permit me to accept of it.

Indeed, the former was restored to a tolerable state; but as for my spirits, those spirits which you have so often admired, which the first geniuses of the age have condescended to be pleased with, and “which have so often set the table in a roar,” they were gone, gone I fear, for ever. In this fallen situation, what figure could I hope to make with that son of laughter, our modern Aristophanes! Besides, the hopes I had of being again retained in the service of the muse I had so long had the honour of representing with success, would have prevented me,

me, had I been in a vein to *play the first fiddle*, as the noble lady once said I did.

Had the Hay-market Theatre been then upon the plan it now is, I know not a performer, if they were able to go through the fatigue, but would gladly have accepted of an engagement, be their consequence what it would. Mr. Colman is indefatigable, and spares no expence to indulge and entertain the town. The former manager depended mostly upon his own strength, and his own pieces, which gave but very few opportunities for a performer in any capital line to make a tolerable figure.

Mr. Woodward, upon his return from Scotland, was pressed to play three or four nights at York; where, as in every other place, he was justly admired. When he came to town, I informed him of my rejection of the house; he seemed to approve of my having done so, as he said, he had not given Mr. Foote any such commission, it being impossible for him to live in the style of a *bon vivant*, like the wit his employer, nor could he exist by himself; here he was pleased to pay me a compliment; that my humble vanity now forbids me to repeat.

During the summer, the manager reaped a plenteous harvest, with very little trouble, which was in a great measure owing to such a favourite actor as Mr. Woodward making one of his company, after an absence of several months; at the conclusion of it, those two gentlemen made a party to go through France; finding myself in the same turn of mind, I took a trip to Boulogne, where I paid a visit to the Convent in which I spent my early days, and had the pleasure of seeing mother St. Francis, the nun for whom I entertained so much respect and affection.

Upon the sight of this much-loved abode of innocence and felicity, I could not help again regretting, with heart-felt anguish, my having ever been forced to leave its peaceful walls. After what I had experienced from the duplicity of mankind, the vicissitudes of fortune, and the unsatisfactoriness of the pleasures of the gay world, I sincerely lamented that I had not preferred the certain tranquillity to be found here, to the delusive joys an unconfined life affords.



You will say, I doubt not, from the knowledge you have of my disposition, that I am always in extremes; now pensive to a degree, and wishing myself buried in the gloom of a cloister; now living beyond all bounds, and dying for company and gaiety.—That this is my temper, I candidly acknowledge—not a particle of moderation is contained in this frame of mine.—Mediocrity and I are strangers.—But whilst I make this acknowledgment, let me hope it will be admitted as some palliation for my errors; to err is human: but as these, like my speech, have ever been spontaneous and unpremeditated, and always attended with sincere compunction; may they, upon this account, be viewed with a less rigorous eye. It is now time that I leave this bewitching convent, which, whenever I visit it, awakens those religious propensities that, amidst all my wanderings, are still inherent in my heart.—Suppose me then once more in England.

Before the geniuses of comedy returned from their tour, Mr. Harris called upon me one day, and as I was not at home, desired my servant to inform me, that he would dine with me the next day. But as he was returning to town, he met me at Turnham-Green, and went back with me: he then told me, that Mr. Colman and the other proprietors were on the eve of being reconciled, and that I might depend upon being included as one of the first articles of the treaty.

Always relying upon a promise, from a consciousness of the sacred light in which I view an obligation of that nature myself, I was as much assured of Mr. Harris's performing that he had now made me, as if my articles had been signed, and in my pocket. Accordingly, when Mr. Woodward returned to England, upon his enquiring what had been done, I informed him of my *certainty* of an engagement. To this he made no reply; and just as I was going to enquire the reason of his silence upon the subject, the servant brought me a letter. I found it to be from my mother, who was but just returned to town from Oxfordshire, where she generally spent the summer with a family by whom her company was much courted. She informed me therein, that Mr. Harris had just called

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at her house, and desired to see me the next day in Brewer-street, where he would meet me, as very particular business rendered it impossible for him to come to Strand.

Upon reading this letter to Mr. Woodward, his countenance seemed to clear up a little, for his looks were always a true barometer to his sentiments. He was a man that might be truly said to carry his heart in his hand. He was above disguise; and you might read in his countenance, with uncommon perspicuity, what passed in his bosom; but the doubt that had prevented him from congratulating me upon the occasion, was not yet quite cleared away. For he said, with great composure, "I doubt

"yet."

I ordered the chaise to be ready at nine, that I might have the pleasure of breakfasting with my mother, whom I had not seen for some time. The manager came an hour before that on which he had appointed to meet me; and I believe would not have been displeased, had I disobeyed his summons; for the moment he came in, I could not avoid observing, from his manner of accosting me, that all was not right. The great master of nature makes \* Brutus say, "Ever note, Lucilius, when love begins to sicken and decay, it useth an enforced ceremony." And judging by this judicious remark of the great Roman, I plainly perceived that the regard Mr. Harris had so lately professed for me, had begun to sicken and decay.

Nor was I deceived in the application; for my supposed superior was no sooner seated, than he informed me that the proprietors were reconciled: but how was I surprised, when he added, that he had mentioned an engagement for me; but that Mr. Leake not seconding it, as he expected, it was not to be procured; as upon the first mention of it, Mr. Colman had declared, that he would sooner see the theatre in flames, and himself in the midst of it, than consent to my ever being of the company.

\* Julius Caesar, Act IV, Scene II.

I was free enough to tell him, that he might at least have deferred this intelligence till an opportunity had offered for his communicating it to me; or he might have conveyed it to me in a letter, and not have brought me to town upon such a sleeveless errand. To which he replied, that as Mr. Colman was anxious to engage Mr. Woodward, he sent for me to advise me to prevail upon my friend not to engage without me.

Rage is not my prevailing weakness, otherwise I should have found it roused upon this occasion. On the contrary, I generally suffer in silence for the misconduct of others, and smother my anger. I had, however, just power to say in answer to this insult, that I had too much spirit to be tacked to the agreement even of the first performer that trod the stage; and too much merit to be unemployed, and take a salary for nothing. Mr. Harris bowed; said he admired my sentiments; and we then parted, with as much ceremony and cold good breeding, as if we had never met before. Thus one half hour destroyed a friendship, which to appearance promised, but three days before, a much greater degree of permanence.

Here could I once more launch out on the fluctuation of all things in life, and the certain disappointments that attended every pleasing expectation of mine. But causes for doing this so frequently occurred in the foregoing pages, that I have nearly exhausted the subject; and I would by no means hazard a charge of repetition, which, from my not keeping copies of my letters, might happen.

G. A. B.

## LETTER. XCI.

December 22, 17—

**I** Now found all my theatrical expectations frustrated: Although, but a few days before, they seemed to be resuming their wonted splendor, and bid fair to be productive of at least some years of unclouded sunshine, in a moment an envious gloom darkened the prospect. Transient, as “when a fable cloud turns forth her silver lining



"to the night," was the flattering hope. But such was my lot.

I could by no means have wished for an engagement, unless it was on condition of being reinstated in most of the parts that had been in my possession, together with my quota of new ones; and as to requesting a favour of that kind from Mr. Woodward, I reprobated the very thought. I could not for a moment suppose, even had I been so unreasonable as to make such a weak proposal, that a person who knew the value of money so well as he did, would have consented to have me (to make use of a political phrase) tacked to him by the way of dependent.

For notwithstanding friendship is a very fine thing to talk of, very few would prove such devotees to it, as to sacrifice a thousand pounds a year upon account of it. As for my own ideas of that sacred union, they are so truly romantic, and so very unfashionable, that I am almost ashamed to make them known; but I should not think worlds too dear a purchase, for the person towards whom I professed a friendship. I now regretted, more poignantly than before, that I had made Mr. Colman my enemy: Though I deplored his resentment, I acknowledged the justice of it. I have, however, the consolation to add, that from that gentleman's liberal behaviour for some time past, I have every reason to believe his displeasure has subsided, and that I have the happiness, once more, to look upon him in the light of a friend.

Upon the third of December I always made a dinner for some friends, in honour of its being the name-day of Comte Haslang. I had accordingly invited some ladies, and his Excellency's Secretary, to dine at my mother's, where I now resided when I came to town.

The evening previous to that day my mother seemed to be indisposed, but as I was in hopes that it was only a slight indisposition, and she herself objected to my putting off the party, I had not done so. When I returned home from paying the usual compliments upon the occasion, I found her in the parlour, much worse than when I left her. Seeing this, I entreated her to permit me to

send for advice ; which she refused, but consented to return to bed.

As I did not apprehend any real danger from my mother's illness, good company joined to good cheer, and good humour, made us laugh rather too loud ; when, to our great surprise, she entered the room, in the midst of our festivity, and turning to Mrs. Howe, one of the ladies present, desired her not to raise a mob about the door by her immoderate laughing. As my mother was a remarkable well-bred woman, and was very particular in her behaviour to those who were tinged with nobility, we concluded this uncommon rudeness must arise from some extraordinary cause.

And so it proved to be ; for we soon perceived, from the tenor of her behaviour, that she was light-headed. I therefore sent away immediately for Doctor Macdonald, a physician of whom she had such a very high opinion, that she always *did him the honour* to consult him upon every slight indisposition of her friends, as well as herself, and that *gratis*. The Doctor immediately came, and apologized for not joining us at dinner, as he had been invited. He informed me, that he was rather late, and recollecting, when he got near Brewer-street, that he was in mourning, he would not commit such a solecism in good manners, as to appear in sables at my grand gala ; he therefore returned, and dined elsewhere.

Doctor Macdonald did all he could to assist my mother for ten or twelve days ; but finding every medicine he prescribed prove ineffectual, he desired that I would call in some other advice. I therefore immediately sent for Doctor Schomberg, a gentleman as eminent for his wit, as distinguished in his profession. When he came, he pronounced her complaint to be a lethargic palsy ; adding, that there were no hopes of her recovery, as it was not in the power of the whole *materia medica* to restore her. He ordered both her head and feet to be blistered, but without any good effect arising from it. She lingered for some time, during which she had no interval of sense ; and whilst I was kneeling by her bed-side, kissing her hand, she cast her eyes upon me with a benignant smile, and left this world without a pang.

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The grief I felt at the loss of my much-loved parent, was lessened by the consideration, that she had every assistance this world could afford her. The poor had reason to regret her departure, as she was benevolent to an excess. Though a rigid economist where she herself was only concerned, she was liberal almost to a fault when any object of compassion excited her tender feelings. I had the satisfaction of seeing those intimates who esteemed her whilst living, severely lament her when dead. As to myself, death deprived me not only of an anxious parent, but of a kind friend. Happy would it have been for me, had I always listened to her prudent admonitions! I should then have been a stranger to error, and consequently to its sure attendants, anguish and misfortune; And I now most severely felt the truth of the adage, "That we never know the value of what we possess, till we are made sensible of it by its loss."

As the landlord of the house in which my mother resided had promised never to raise the rent whilst she or myself chose to continue his tenant, and it was greatly under-let, I determined to keep it. Every thing my parent died possessed of having originated from me, I thought I had an undoubted right to whatever that might be; and my brother having resigned all pretensions to her property, I thought it needless to take out letters of administration.

I had invited a lady and her two daughters, to be with me during my mother's illness; and she was so kind as to continue her visit, in order to keep me from the melancholy with which a mind so susceptible as mine must naturally be oppressed. As my mother had always lived in the style of a gentlewoman, I had her buried as such. Those about me endeavoured to persuade me not to go to her funeral, but their remonstrances were in vain. As I had paid her every possible attention while living, I was determined, cost what pangs it would, to pay the last tribute of duty, by attending her remains to the grave.

I must here observe, that I cannot help thinking, but that persons who pretend to such over-nice feelings, as to be prevented thereby from paying these last respectful offices to a deceased relation or friend, shew an unnatural  
and



and false delicacy. I consider them as an indispensable duty, and a debt of nature; and will venture to call an omission of them unpardonable affectation. Else, why should those of the lower ranks be deprived of that extreme susceptibility. Dame Nature being their guide, she conducts them, with decent sorrow, to the grave of those they loved whilst living.

Now prepare yourself to hear another of those unexpected and ill-natured strokes of fortune, with which she has so frequently belaboured me: So quick is generally the transition, that she might be said to give with one hand, and immediately to rob me of the newly-possessioned gift with the other. As if the fickle Goddess had determined that I should never retain the possession of any property; let it be thrown into my lap by her from whatever quarter it would.

My visitor, Mrs Butler, and myself, were sitting together in conversation one evening, soon after the death of my mother, when a loud and violent rap at the door alarmed us. As such an incident was unusual, I ordered the servant not to open the door, but to enquire what occasioned it from the area. Upon her going out for that purpose, she was informed, that if she did not immediately open the door, it would be broke open, as they had got the broad seal. Not knowing what was meant by having the broad seal, I demanded from the window their business. To this they answered, that I should be informed when they were let in; and if that was not done presently, they had authority to break open the door.

Finding there was no probability of preventing their entrance, I ordered the door to be opened; when five or six fellows rushed in, and took possession, in the name of that honour to his *honourable* profession, my cousin Crawford.

That worthy and conscientious man no sooner heard of my mother's death, and found that I had been so imprudent as not to make any legal claim of her property, than he took out letters of administration, by swearing himself her legitimate heir. Fearless of the iniquity of the measure, or the consequence of it, my *honest* kinsman thought if he could but appropriate her effects to his own use,

use, he would set at defiance a future reckoning. He accordingly adopted this mode with success.

As it happened not to be term time, I had no resource but patience; for I found it to no manner of purpose to endeavour to bring the savages by which I was surrounded, to reason. A fruitless altercation indeed took place, but they persisted in my quitting the premises that night. It was by this time past eleven o'clock; Mrs. Butler's children were in bed; and where to get a lodging at that late hour I knew not. At last I thought of sending to Mr. Woodward, who had taken a large house in Leicester-street, in order to let part of it. That gentleman consented, with great cheerfulness, to accommodate us till I could provide myself, though he was obliged to get out of his bed to receive us.

The next day I sent to inform Mr. Gordon, the undertaker that had deposited the remains of my much-loved mother, of what had happened, and desired him to look to the administrator for the expences of the funeral. He sent for answer, that as I had ordered the funeral, he should expect me to pay for it; that it was a very genteel one; and he desired any one of the trade to furnish one more elegant for fifty guineas, though he should only charge me forty-two. As Mr. Gordon was a neighbour, and my mother was so greatly respected that numbers attended her manes without invitation, I was in hopes he would have been my friend upon the occasion, and have endeavoured to ease me of that load; but no! he chose to be his own friend, and to fix the debt upon me, without giving himself any trouble.

What made this event the more vexatious was, that the seven hundred pounds, owing by the Widow Lock to my mother, as already mentioned, was to have been paid the Wednesday following. In the confusion and fright I was in when I left the house, I forgot the papers relative to this debt. As they were placed in a china closet in the parlour, that they might be ready when wanted, the wretches who had taken possession, probably thought them of no value, and had thrown them by as waste paper; so that all I got by the death of my dear mother, was a poor girl she recommended to my charge, and who became

came an additional burthen to me. I never knew she was a relation, till my dying mother enjoined me to find her out, and take care of her.

The effects belonging to my mother were sold for an old song, as the saying is; but as the house was let to me, though only verbally, the fixtures could not be disposed of. I commenced a suit in the Commons against the depredator, which I should undoubtedly have gained, as I was born in wedlock; but an unexpected circumstance prevented me from receiving any redress. The wretch having spent all the money that arose from the sale of the effects, and having besides bullied some tenants that rented the stables belonging to the house out of what money was due, and being now apprehensive of the consequences of his infamous transactions, he took the Gravesend boat in order to fly his country. Justice, however, here overtook him; for being much intoxicated, he fell into the river, and was never heard of more.

Had he received the desert due to his crimes, he would have been exalted instead of sunk. In this opinion I dare say you will readily concur with me, when I relate to you the following instance of his rapaciousness and inhumanity; though indeed from those I have already presented you with, I think I need not doubt of your entertaining the utmost abhorrence for his conduct.

This unnatural being, (I will not debase the name of father by bestowing it on him,) kept his son in prison, for refusing to join with him in disposing of an annuity in which he had an interest. This was an annuity of fifty pounds a year in the Exchequer, the remains of two hundred; Crawford's wife having, during her life-time, joined with him in disposing of the other hundred and fifty. He had also spent ten thousand pounds in money; part of which, in justice, ought to have been mine, as it devolved to him from another branch of the Sykes's family.

In order to terrify the lad into a compliance with his requisition, the inhuman monster threw him, although yet a minor, into the Fleet Prison, after having arrested him for board and lodging; and here this unfortunate young man remained till Crawford's death, as he had resolution  
enough



enough to bear a disagreeable confinement, rather than consent to so unjust a proposal.

Must there not be some place, red with uncommon vengeance, where a severe retribution will await such complicated crimes, such a continued system of dishonesty? There must; there will!—Though he was able to fly from that punishment the laws of his country were on the point of inflicting on him, (for tardy-footed justice had nearly overtaken him) yet he will not have it in his power to eschew her rigorous grasp in that state, where all accounts of this nature are settled: The day of reckoning must come.

I was now obliged to send word to the Bishop of Gloucester that I could not wait on him to receive the seven hundred pounds due from Mr. Lock to my mother, as the papers relative to the debt were lost. To which his Lordship returned for answer, that he could by no means think of paying the money, unless I could give up the obligations, as he should still be liable to pay it to those who might find them.

Thus, without being able to receive a shilling of my mother's property, through the dishonesty of my worthy Cousin, I found I had the funeral expences to pay, together with some demands she had incurred which I had promised to discharge, and likewise the costs of the suit I had commenced in the Commons, which amounted to seventeen pounds; so that I think I might say that, according to my usual good luck, I *gained a loss* upon the occasion. But strange events sometimes produce strange consequences, as was the case with this; for, soon after, I was honoured with a visit from Lord Hampden, whom I had not seen since a child, who presented me with a bank note for twenty pounds, in as *pompous* a manner as if it had been a million.

G. A. B.

## LETTER XCII.

Dec. 29, 17—

**I**F I shall not be thought worthy of any encomiums for the matter contained in my letters, or for my manner of inditing them, I flatter myself you will at least think  
me

me entitled to some praise for my indefatigable application in writing them, for the more speedy gratification of your curiosity. A reference to the dates of my letters will convince you, that I have devoted almost every hour, since I first began the task, to the employment. Indeed, a long confinement, occasioned by indisposition and distresses, has not a little tended to accelerate my undertaking; and as neither of these causes are yet removed, there is a probability that I shall be able to proceed with the same expedition, and that it will not be long before I shall be able to put an end to my tale, and with it to your expectant wishes. For this purpose I will now proceed; without any further circumscription.

Having sent for my furniture from Strand on the Green, I was soon settled again in Brewer-street. Comte Haslang having heard of my distress, told me he would pay for the furniture of my first floor, which came to one hundred and twenty pounds; and desired I would fix a time of payment with the upholsterer. Mr. Woodward complimented me with two capital basso-relievos for the door, three handsome girandoles, a beautiful grate, &c. &c. and as every person with whom I was intimate presented me with some ornament or other, my house, in appearance, was a little cabinet.

Just at this time, Mr. Calcraft died. It was announced in the papers that he had left me a considerable sum, but the report was entirely without foundation; my name was no otherwise mentioned in the will, than as the mother of his children. I believe I might venture to say, that he was not regretted even by those to whom he left his fortune. The vexation he must feel at knowing himself to be despised and neglected to such a degree, as to be able to purchase no other company than that of a few wretched dependents, greatly affected his pride, for of *true spirit* he had not a spark. Not all his riches, his sumptuous dwellings, nor his luxurious wines, could procure him one respectable individual as a companion: He was therefore obliged, as I have been informed, to take up with his clerk, an attorney, and I suppose an exciseman, as a person of that calling generally makes one in such a group; for even his brother the General declined going near him.

I must

I must acquaint you, that he promised to leave a handsome provision for his intimate, the clerk just mentioned, which I conclude was his inducement for bestowing so much time on his despised master; instead of which, he only left him the immense sum of a hundred pounds; a deed which tallies with the many generous deeds I have already related of him.

He left behind him a princely fortune, but without bequeathing a shilling to his wife, or even mentioning her name; a failure by which she recovered a third of his estate, as well as of his personal fortune. This, however, has involved the estate in such difficulties, that I find his debts are not paid to this day. Every body seemed to rejoice when Mrs. Calcraft's suit for the recovery of her claim was attended with success; and I can sincerely say, that no person received greater pleasure upon the occasion than I did, as I have been informed she is one of the best of women.

At length the stipulated day came, when I was to pay Mr. Cullen, the upholsterer, for the furniture of my first floor, and which Comte Hassang had promised to enable me to do. I had appointed four o'clock for the hour of payment, and had wrote to his Lordship to acquaint him that was the time fixed. Mrs. Tuffnal and the Secretary were with me, when I received an answer, written upon a quarter of a sheet of paper, and sealed at the corner, like a common note.

I opened it; and finding it to begin in the usual style, of "I wonder you will not get an engagement," I concluded that the remainder was of the same tenor, in order to excuse a breach of promise; and as I could not possibly suppose any bill was inclosed in a note of that size and form, I immediately threw it into the fire. Upon which Mr. Killroff jokingly said, "Do you treat all your billet-doux in that manner?" A billet-doux! I replied; "It is not of that nature; it is a trifling subterfuge to avoid paying a promise."

While I sat ruminating on the Comte's supposed evasion, the porter returned with a message, expressive of his Lord's surprise at my not condescending to honour him with an answer. I sent back my compliments, and I could



could not conceive there was any answer required to a note upon so disagreeable and hackneyed a subject. The servant went away and returned directly, with a double surprize of his Lordship's, who sent me word, that if his letter required no answer, at least I ought to have acknowledged the receipt of the *bill*. The word *bill* was no sooner pronounced, than I gave a violent scream, and cried out, "I am undone! I am undone! I have burnt it."—And we all sat as motionless as statues for some time.

At length the porter returned home, and the secretary soon followed. When, in two or three hours, I received the note of a banker in the city, I think Nightingale's, promising to pay the sum of one hundred and twenty pounds if such a bank-bill should make its appearance within that time. Fortunately the Comte, having leisure that morning, and being alone, had amused himself with taking an account of the number of some bank-notes he had just received; a precaution which he had never before taken; and he has often affirmed since, that he could not account for entertaining such an idea then.

Mr. Woodward was kind enough to advance me the money upon this engagement, by which means I was enabled to preserve my credit with Mr. Cullen the upholsterer; and, as from the bank-notes being consumed to ashes, there was a certainty that payment could not be demanded, at the expiration of the time Mr. Woodward received the money. This incident taught his Excellency to fold letters, containing bills, in a *proper* manner; and your humble servant to examine, in future, the inside of the smallest scrap of paper that might be sent to her before she burnt it.

I now thought myself tolerably easy, as I had let the best part of my house to a brother of the great Parker, who was newly married, for five guineas a week, reserving for my own use the back-parlour, and the two back-rooms on the second floor. The former I made my library; and though it did not contain above four hundred volumes, I have the vanity to say these were well chosen. Nothing but festivity and expence was to be

seen;

seen; and the servants received as much company below stairs, as the bride and bridegroom did above.

This being the case, in order to be out of so much riot and confusion, I allowed my two maid-servants board-wages for the three months the family was to be with me, and recommended my man to Mr. Woodward. Having done this, I went out early upon a visit to some friend or other, and returned home only to sleep.

Mr. Gordon, the undertaker, beginning to be very pressing for his bill for my mother's funeral, I endeavoured to borrow the money, which was forty guineas. Upon this occasion a young gentleman of my acquaintance recommended me to one Cohen, a Jew money-lender, who promised to get me the cash upon my notes in a few days. In order to make them the more negotiable, he desired I would give them in two separate notes, payable to himself, and at different dates. Being perfectly unacquainted with transactions of this nature, and not entertaining the least suspicion of the man's honesty, I did as he desired me; and having this prospect of being able to discharge Mr. Gordon's bill, I sent to let him know that I would do it in the course of the following week.

Encouraged by Mrs. Calcraft's success, I began to think of my annuity, which had not been paid for a long time. I accordingly sent to have Mr. Wedderburne's opinion, when I was informed it must be at my own expence. To this I consented; but not being able to offer the usual fee with the case, and the person I depended on not being willing to advance it, the affair lay dormant, at the time I imagined I had the first advice in the kingdom.

A week passed after I had given the Jew my notes, without my hearing any thing from him; when upon sending to the young gentleman who had recommended him, I was informed that my *little Isaac* was gone off; and I heard no further tidings, either of him or my notes, till they were presented for payment.

There is nothing, I am told, calls louder for the interference of the Legislature, than the frequent frauds of some of the present race of advertising money-lenders, to whom the appellation of Swindlers has been justly given. Those who are unfortunately necessitated to apply to them, allured

allured by the specious promises held forth in their advertisements, doubt not of receiving from them a ready assistance; instead of which, they generally find themselves more deeply involved, if not irretrievably ruined. If once you deliver into their hands any notes or bills, it is a hundred to one if ever you receive any value for them; or, if you do, it is but a proportionably small part; and as these are usually paid away to tradesmen who can swear they have given a valuable consideration for them, your plea, of not having received any yourself, is of no avail. Nor have you any hopes of redress from contesting the payment of your notes. All the consolation you receive in a court of justice is, that you should not have been so silly as to pay attention to the delusive advertisements. Many, very many, I have been informed, have reason, at this very hour, to lament their having listened to the specious pretexts of these insatiable harpies, some of whom live in ease and dissipation upon the spoils of the unfortunate.

Mr. Davy's executors, who had revived the suit relative to my annuity, now appeared to be in earnest; and as Mr. Calcraft's executors seemed to wish to keep the estate in law, in order to retain the management of a property, that from its immense value must undoubtedly be productive of some benefit, they determined to contest it with them. The latter had even the folly or madness to send to me, to desire I would join in the bill against myself, and those who had advanced me the money upon it. This you may be assured I refused to do; on the contrary, notwithstanding my natural aversion to all pecuniary business, I determined to prosecute the affair against them with vigour.

The only thing that retarded my design, was the want of money to carry it into execution; for what I received from the gentleman who had hired my house, was devoted to pay the rent of it. I however resolved to wait on Mr. Wedderburne, now Lord Loughborough, to enquire what opinion he had given upon the suit, and what was necessary to be done further in the prosecution of it.

Lord



Lord Huntingdon, whom I had formerly the honour of knowing, was just returned from making the tour of Europe with his nephews. As every person who ever heard of that Nobleman, must allow him to be one of the brightest ornaments of nobility, his liberality of sentiment adding graces to his other eminent virtues, I was encouraged to solicit his assistance upon this emergency: I therefore wrote to him, and acquainted him with my purpose.

His Lordship immediately called upon me, and with that elegance which attends all his actions, presented me with a rouleau, greatly exceeding what I then thought I had occasion for: He at the same time requested, that if in future I should be pressed, I would make him my banker. A woman is never so highly flattered, as when she is thought worthy of the notice of *distinguished* characters, which my Lord Huntingdon is in an eminent degree; and a promise he then made me, to bestow upon me some of his leisure hours, I esteemed more valuable than even the necessary and valuable present he had given me. I must not omit to inform you, that in order to apologize for a few minutes delay before he waited upon me, his Lordship dispatched a relation, who afterwards attended him during his visit, to acquaint me with it. This information will perhaps appear to you to be needless, but you will find that it is not so. It is absolutely necessary to introduce this gentleman here, in order that you might be acquainted with him at a future period.

I had scarcely time to congratulate myself upon the real satisfaction I felt from this event, when I was informed, that the cause I had been advised to enter into with Mr. Gordon, relative to the expences of my mother's funeral, which undoubtedly the administrator ought to have paid, was given against me; and, if not immediately settled, I should be sued to execution. In addition to this, as misfortunes seldom come alone, I was served at the same moment with copies of writs for the notes I had put into Cohan's hands; and, to crown all, a draft drawn upon me from my son Harry, who was abroad, was presented to me for payment.

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Such an interruption to the pleasing reflections I was indulging, threw once more a gloom over my mind, which put it out of my power to wait upon Mr. Wedderburne as I had intended; I therefore wrote a line to Mr. Woodward, requesting that he would do it for me. That gentleman being abroad when my note came, he was obliged to postpone going till the next day; by which time the term being ended, he was not able to meet with him. By such a train of untoward incidents, was my case prevented from coming to the knowledge of that great lawyer; and thus by *intervening* circumstances, which counteract the best intentions, are the most important designs oftentimes frustrated.

The demand for the expenses of my mother's funeral being so very urgent, and amounting, through the additional law-charges, to near double the original bill, I thought my personal safety required that it should be first discharged. I accordingly appropriated the money for which I was indebted to Lord Huntingdon's generosity, and which was intended for another purpose, to this.

A discovery soon ensued; for his Lordship meeting Counsellor Wedderburne some short time after, very kindly enquired whether there were any hopes of success for me in the prosecution of my suit; when the Counsellor answered, to his Lordship's great surprise, that he knew nothing of such a suit. Nor, indeed, was it possible that he should know any thing of a suit in my name; for, as I afterwards found, it was indiscreetly carried on *then* in the name of the claimants, Mr. Davy's executors, who had even made me a party against my own cause, by joining me, in their application to the court, with Mr. Calcraft's executors; and this occasioned the latter's sending to me when they filed their answer.

Lord Huntingdon, justly incensed at my apparent duplicity, wrote me a letter full of the most severe reproaches; saying every thing in it that a generous heart must feel, when it supposes itself the dupe of deception. This letter his Lordship sent by his relation before-mentioned, to whom I explained the whole affair; notwithstanding I was so greatly shocked at the contents of the epistle,

epistle, that I could scarcely summon fortitude sufficient to do it. Duplicity being a crime of the first magnitude in my estimation, and with which it has ever been my boast that I have been totally unacquainted, a charge of this nature, consequently, could not fail of giving me *uncommon* pain.

Yet my anxiety of clearing myself from so cutting an impeachment, gave me courage to smother my feelings, in order to exonerate myself. In doing this, I dwelt much upon the happiness I flattered myself with receiving from his Lordship's promised visits; which, I said, must reflect infinite credit upon those he honoured with his acquaintance; as the brilliancy of his talents, his acknowledged sense, wit, and good-breeding, not only rendered him conspicuous in all the foreign Courts, but justly entitled his Lordship to the encomium passed on him by the late Lord Chesterfield, who pronounced him "one of the brightest ornaments of the English Nobility." This, I continued, caused the pain produced by his displeasure to be the more sensibly felt.

From the fervent manner in which I expressed myself upon this occasion, (for, as I have said before, I know not a medium when my sensibility is awakened,) my visitor threw out something of an inuendo of his Lordship's having formerly been a gallant of mine. I assured him that he was mistaken, which impressed his Lordship's bounty the deeper on my heart. The moment I had uttered these words, the round face of the gentleman lost its rotundity, and lengthened into an extreme oblong. He immediately arose from his seat, saying, "Then, indeed, it alters the case." And muttering some words to himself, which I could not distinguish the purport of, he hastily took his leave.

I wrote soon after to Mr. Wedderburne, to desire permission to wait on him at his first leisure, but was not honoured with an answer; which I suppose was owing to the multiplicity of business he was engaged in. I was therefore obliged to content myself with the hopes, that if ever I should get the suit, it would afford me an opportunity of explaining the affair to Lord Huntingdon.—The only mode of atoning for a *real* error, or excusing a *supposed* one,



one, is by an open and unreserved explanation. This is the method I have now pursued; and I hope it will tend to imprint on his Lordship's mind, if my "Apology" should fall into his hands, a more favourable idea of the transaction than he has hitherto entertained of it. He has, till now, been able to judge only from appearances; and these, I acknowledge, have been against me. But the foregoing elucidation having now placed every circumstance in its true light, I flatter myself it will restore me to his Lordship's good opinion, on which I set no common value.—I must just be permitted to repeat, that there is no one living, who can hold even the appearance of duplicity in greater detestation than myself.

G. A. B.

## LETTER XXIII.

Jan. 4, 17—.

**I** Think I informed you, that upon my leaving Parliament-street, Lord Tyrawley had taken my son Harry Calcraft, and placed him at an academy near Greenwich, in order to be near him when at Blackheath, where he mostly resided. His lordship was particularly fond of the boy, whom he seemed to think a nonpareil; and was greatly concerned at finding him bent upon going to sea. But as my young gentleman was not to be contradicted, he was sent out as a midshipman on board a man of war. When he heard of his father's death, he resolved to quit his nautical employment, which he was now tired of, and turn fine gentleman; a profession he was, indeed, much better qualified for than the former.

About this period Lord Tyrawley died.—An incident that did not much affect me at the time it happened, as his Lordship's faculties had been so much impaired for a long while before he departed this life, that his dissolution was rather to be wished for than dreaded. It is very singular (but I think I have made a similar remark before) that those who are endowed with talents superior to the generality of their fellow-creatures, have most commonly the unhappiness to survive their mental qualities. And in

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every considerate mind it must give rise to the most humiliating sensations, to behold those we look up to as the phenomenas of the age, reduced again to a state of childhood. A circumstance which fully confirms the truth of Solomon's assertion, "that all is vanity and vexation of spirit." Or, as Shakespeare finely describes it\*,

"Last scene of all,  
That ends this strange eventful history,  
Is second childishness, and mere oblivion,  
Sans teeth, sans eyes, sans taste, sans every thing."

Miss O'Hara formally announced to me his Lordship's death, and the day appointed for his funeral; which was, it seems, fixed for the Sunday following his demise. His Lordship had ordered by his will, that his remains should be deposited in Chelsea Hospital, among the old veterans who had so often fought under his command. As he did not expect that any compliment would be paid him by Government, he desired that his funeral might be a private one, and half a guinea given to each soldier that attended. Miss O'Hara to obey her father's will, to the very letter of it, read each man who *had actually fought* with his lordship; and as I believe there was only about twenty-five of these living, they only were directed to attend.

As I supposed his Lordship's funeral rites had been celebrated on the day which had been announced to me, I went into mourning. But some days after, having a great deal of company, we went into the drawing-room. We had not been there long, before we observed a hearse splendidly attorned with escutcheons and trophies of honour. Upon this we all flocked to the windows; and as it came from the undertaker's the corner of Golden-square, we had a full view of this gorgeous receptacle of the dead. But how great was my astonishment, when I beheld that the escutcheons bore the three Black Lions, his Lordship's arms. I was no longer mistress of myself. What I could support at a distance, upon a nearer view,

\* As you like it, Act II, Scene IX.

struck me with the most severe anguish, and overwhelmed me with grief.

Upon enquiry I found, that a public burial had been offered by Government, in order to pay due respect to his Lordship's memory and valour, but was declined by his much favoured daughter. Who alledged the fulfilling her father's desire, as expressed in the will, as a reason for her refusal. I am, however, persuaded, that could her pride have been gratified without the expence of the half guineas, as every pensioner in the hospital, had the offer been accepted of would have walked, she would gladly have consented. This had occasioned the ceremony to be postponed.

Just after this event, my son Harry returned from abroad; which, to a mother who loved him to excess, was no small happiness. He continued with me for some months; but having the misfortune to connect himself with one of the worst of women, to my no small mortification he removed to a lodging, where he might take greater liberties than he could at the house of a parent.

About the same period, my eldest son George Metham returned from America, having there signalized himself by his courage and intrepidity, particularly in taking a fort of some importance with a handful of men; by way of recompence, he was promoted to a company; which, though obtained by purchase, was a singular mark of distinction at his age.

His return made me completely happy for the time, as he was not only the best of sons, but a sincere friend and affectionate brother. And though he could not boast the brilliancy of parts with Harry, he might value himself upon the strictest honour, and one of the best of hearts. His first care was to assist me; which he did to the extent of his power. He then went in search of my younger son, who had enthralled himself greatly; and notwithstanding he was under age, had got into confinement.

Captain Metham's credit unfortunately was good. He was security for his brother to a very large amount. And this not only for a sum sufficient to exonerate him from debt,

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debt, but to purchase him a commission in the same regiment to which he belonged, as he entertained not the least doubt of his brother's readiness to go to America. My eldest son, however, having an opportunity of exchanging, as he then thought, to advantage, into a regiment at Jamaica, and having likewise obtained the place of deputy governor of Fort Charles in that island, he was prevented from attending his brother as proposed.

The consequence of which was, that soon after his departure, the unworthy woman, who had got an ascendancy over my younger son, prevailed upon him to dispose of his commission, and accompany her to France. He there involved himself in debts to the amount of twelve hundred pounds, and was once more put in confinement; and in this situation he remained some time, till Mr. Williams, one of Mr. Calcraft's executors, a very respectable person, went to redeem him. Captain Metham's going to Jamaica gave me the most poignant grief, as I trembled for a life made doubly precious to me from his being a friend as well as a son.

Mr. Woodward was now no longer able to conceal the complaint under which he had so long laboured, in consequence of a fall he met with at the theatre; it came upon him with such force, that he was obliged to call in Mr. Bromfield. But notwithstanding the great skill of that gentleman, and his incessant attention, there appeared but little hopes of his accomplishing a cure.

This eminent actor, had the year before compromised his law-suit with Mr. Barry. He had then taken bonds payable yearly for a term of years, at two hundred pounds every March. He had some time before asked me, who I would advise should be his executor, as he kindly informed me he purposed leaving me the whole of what he possessed, exclusive of the interest of a sum of money in the funds, which he intended bequeathing to his brother for his life. As I had, and with reason, the highest opinion of the honour and integrity of Townley Ward, Esq; I immediately named him. He accordingly made the will; and happy had it been for me, had that will

subsisted, I should then have received some benefit from what was bequeathed to me.

But here again my usual ill-luck attended me; Mr. Woodward had desired Mr. Ward to get Barry's life insured, as he also was in a decline, and thought to be in danger; but through the multiplicity of business that gentleman was engaged in, the clerk, who was ordered to procure the policy, forgot it. Upon the demise of Barry, Mr. Woodward was displeased at the omission; not considering the improbability of any office insuring the life of a person, whose bad state of health made it so very precarious. He, however, immediately applied to a neighbour, whose name was Cornish, and requested that he would be one of his executors, and at the same time to send his attorney to make a fresh will. There were very little hopes, when this happened, of his recovery, as he had been in the most excruciating torments for four months, and every day his decay became more and more visible.

My attention he had every claim to. He consulted me upon the alteration of his will, which gave me the most sensible mortification, and desired me to make choice of some person to be executor with Cornish. As I have at all times (which I have very frequently had occasion to observe) an insuperable objection to dispute about pecuniary affairs, and his illness making me apprehensive that he might take umbrage at my attempting to contradict him, I thought myself obliged to submit. I accordingly requested William Bromfield, Esq; to accept the trust.

I had not indeed any particular reason to expect the friendship of that gentleman. He had attended me at my mother's when I was a girl, for a complaint in my finger, which it was feared would turn to a mortification. And when I was so unfortunate as to reside in Parliament-street, he had made me a request I could not possibly comply with; another gentleman of the profession having every right to claim the little interest I had, from the very great attention he had always paid me; but notwithstanding this, I imagined from his behaviour towards me at the present juncture, where I had an opportunity

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of seeing him every day with his dying patient, that I should meet in him an indulgent protector.

I have always had the highest esteem for Mr. Bromfield; and notwithstanding I have been treated with the utmost inhumanity, from the executors refusing to act, and leaving me totally in the power of their attorney, I acquit Mr. Bromfield; as to my certain knowledge many falsehoods have been repeated to him to poison his mind against me, by a person, in order to prevent coming to a regular account.

I am sorry to say, that many are the instances I could give of the inhuman treatment I have received upon this occasion. In the first place, he involved what was bequeathed to me by Mr. Woodward in two lawsuits, one with the brother of my deceased friend, and the other with the executor and executrix of Mr. Barry, whom he sued here in England, instead of employing Mr. Burton in Dublin, who had the *warrants* to the bond left with him, to enter judgment on Crow-street Theatre, in case of non-payment of the stipulated sums. Nor is the account he has sent me, by any means the same as that delivered me by Mr. Cornish, who acted as executor for a time. He neither gives credit for the monies left in his hands, nor for what he has received since.

I mention these circumstances, in hopes that some gentleman of the law, who is possessed of knowledge, joined with humanity, will favour me with his assistance upon this occasion, and endeavour to rescue a distressed and ill-treated woman out of such hands. That there are gentlemen of the law, who are as conspicuous for their probity and philanthropy as for their abilities, I am well assured, notwithstanding my severe strictures on one branch of the *profession* in a former letter. — To such I beg leave to recommend my case; and, for their perusal shall insert a copy of Mr. Woodward's will, from which they will be able to form a judgment of my claims; and I flatter myself, that some mode of redress might be found out and pursued.

To Lord Mansfield, that great luminary of the law, do I likewise look up. And I will most humbly hope, from his Lordship's well-known love of justice, and his huma-



nity, that the cause of a depressed woman will not be thought unworthy of his attention.

*Copy of Mr. Woodward's WILL.*

" IN THE NAME OF GOD, Amen. I Henry Woodward, of Chapel-street, Grosvenor-place, in the parish of St. George, Hanover-square, in the county of Middlesex, being of sound mind, memory, and understanding, do make and publish this my last will and testament, as follows :

" First, I do order and direct, that my funeral expences, and my just debts, be fully paid and satisfied ; and the expences of proving this my will.

" Item. I give to William Bromfield, Esq; one hundred guineas, and my onyx ring ; and to my neighbour, Mr. Mason Cornish, twenty guineas for a ring.

" Item. I give and bequeath to my friend, George Anne Bellamy, my gold watch, chain and seals. And also my plate, jewels, linen, and china, and the whole of the furniture of the house in Chapel-street aforesaid.

" Item. I give and bequeath to my executors, herein after named, and the survivor of them, and the executors and administrators of the survivor of them, seven hundred pounds in the three per cent. consolidated bank annuities, standing in my name in the books of the Governor and Company of the Bank of England, in *trust*, to and for the several uses, intents, and purposes herein after mentioned ; that is to say, in *trust*, to receive the interest, dividends, and produce thereof, and pay the same, as it from time to time becomes due and payable, unto my brother John Woodward, tallow-chandler, at Cripplegate, London, during his natural life ; and from and immediately after his decease, in *trust*, to sell and dispose of the said seven hundred pounds three per cent. consolidated bank annuities, and to lay out and invest the monies arising from the sale thereof, in the purchase of an annuity to

" be secured in their own name, and at their own discre-  
 " tion, for and during the natural life of George Anne  
 " Bellamy. And I do hereby direct, and it is my express  
 " will, intent, and desire, that my said executors and  
 " trustees, and the survivor of them, do and shall, from  
 " time to time, receive the said annuity, as the same  
 " shall become quarterly due and payable, and then pay  
 " the same personally to the said George Anne Bellamy;  
 " and that her receipt alone shall, from time to time, be  
 " a discharge to my executors and trustees for the same.  
 " And it is my further express will, intent, and direction,  
 " that the said annuity shall be for her sole use; and  
 " that the money arising therefrom shall not be liable to  
 " the payment of the debts, or to the sale or assignment  
 " of the said George Anne Bellamy, or to the payment  
 " of the debts, power, controul, of any person she may here-  
 " after marry. But in case of the death of the said George  
 " Anne Bellamy in the life-time of my said brother, then  
 " in *trust*, from and immediately after her death, to  
 " transfer the said seven hundred pounds three per cent.  
 " consolidated annuities to him, his executors, admini-  
 " strators, and assigns.  
 " All the rest, residue, and remainder of my personal es-  
 " tate whatsoever or wheresoever, that I shall be possessed of  
 " at the time of my decease, I do hereby give and be-  
 " queath unto my executors hereafter named, in *trust*, to  
 " sell and dispose of the same, with all convenient speed,  
 " next after my decease; and with the monies arising from  
 " such sale thereof, purchase an annuity, to be secured in  
 " their own names, and at their own discretion, for and  
 " during the natural life of the said George Anne Bella-  
 " my. And I do hereby direct, and it is my express  
 " will and desire, that my said executors, and the sur-  
 " vivors of them, do and shall, from time to time, re-  
 " ceive the said annuity, as the same shall from time to  
 " time become quarterly due and payable, and then pay  
 " the same personally to the said George Anne Bellamy;  
 " and whose receipt alone shall, from time to time, be a  
 " discharge to my executors and trustees for the same.  
 " And it is my further express will, intent, and direction,  
 " that

" that the said annuity shall be for her sole use; and that  
 " the money arising therefrom shall not be liable to any  
 " debts, or to the sale or assignment of the said George  
 " Anne Bellamy, or to the payment of debts, power,  
 " or controul, or disposal of any person she may here-  
 " after marry.

" And lastly, I do hereby nominate, constitute, and  
 " appoint, the aforesaid William Bromfield, Esq; and  
 " the said Mafon Cornish, executors and trustees of this  
 " my will, hereby revoking and making void all former  
 " wills by me at any time heretofore made, and hereby  
 " declaring this my last will and testament. In witness  
 " whereof, I the said Henry Woodward have, to this  
 " my last will and testament, set my hand and seal, this  
 " 20th day of January, in the year of our Lord 1777.

" Signed,  
 " HENRY WOODWARD.

" Signed, sealed, published, and declared by the said  
 " Henry Woodward, as and for his last will and  
 " testament, in the presence of us,

" ANNE PITT,  
 " E. WILLET,

" No. 89, Wardour-street, Soho."

Thus have I laid before you (I address myself again to  
 you) the contents of the last will and testament of my  
 dear departed friend. Nothing can be more clearly ex-  
 pressed, or more plainly intended for my benefit than it  
 is.—One would imagine, that it was next to impossible to  
 counteract the kind intent of it.—And yet, from the most  
 unaccountable perversion of it, no benefit has, as yet,  
 arisen to me from it.—Could the worthy testator look out  
 from his grave, and see what steps have been taken, his  
 honest heart would bound with indignant pulsations.—But  
 I will not anticipate the circumstances.

G. A. B.  
 L E T



## L E T T E R XCIV.

January 18, 1772.

**T**HE very great attention I paid Mr. Woodward during his illness greatly affected my health; as he seemed not to be satisfied with any other person's being near him, or doing any thing for him, but the surgeons and myself; indeed, his situation was so critical, that had he not been treated with the utmost care, he could not have been retained in this world so long. During the seven months of his indisposition, I went into a bed but eleven nights. The eve of his departure I was so greatly indisposed, that nature, wearied out, could support no longer; and I was obliged to retire, leaving him to the care of a gentlewoman who was my intimate, and who, as he was very partial to her, shared in giving her assistance.

He bore this long and painful illness with the greatest resignation and fortitude. The morning of his death, Mr. Bromfield hastened out of his room in tears; for upon his saying, "God b'wye, Harry!" my dying friend replied, with the utmost composure, and an affecting tenderness in the modulation of his voice, "Farewell! I shall never see you more!" When I approached the bed to give him his medicine, he regretted not having sufficient power to repay my unwearied attention; and then taking me by the hand with some agitation, he said, "I am going. Lord have mercy upon me!" and expired.

Thus ended a man, who was as eminent for rectitude, honour, probity, morality, and religion, as he was allowed great in his profession: and though eulogies to his memory were unnecessary, his worth, both as an actor and as a valuable member of society, being so well known, yet it has been often a matter of surprise to me, that among the number of his friends and of his contemporaries at Merchant-Taylor's School, there appeared no public tribute to his merit, except some lines upon the occasion written by the reverend Mr. Madden.

Upon his demise, I gave way to that grief I had endeavoured to smother during his life-time; and indeed, I must have been the most ungrateful woman breathing, after the repeated obligations he had conferred upon me, had I not paid every tribute to his memory. So extreme were my sorrows, that I was immediately seized with a fever, which for some days rendered me insensible.

At this time I was still indebted to Lazarus the jeweller, whom I have already mentioned. His son-in-law Solomon being his heir, upon hearing of the legacy Mr. Woodward had just left me, applied to an attorney to recover the debt. This attorney, by methods which I find were not at that time uncommon, prosecuted the suit, without my knowing any thing of the commencement of it, till he had sued out an outlawry against me. He declared that he wrote to me to demand the debt, but as I never received the letter, I could not answer it; and I experienced upon the occasion, the most cruel and almost unprecedented treatment.

As soon as I was able to be moved, I was advised to go into the country, it being thought improper for me to return to my own house (in which I had a family of distinction,) till my affairs were settled. Accordingly, the upholsterer who occasionally let my house, and who was the gentleman director of the funeral of my worthy friend, was deputed to get me a lodging. He fixed upon one at No. 5, Walcot-place, Lambeth, to which place I removed.

When the mistress of the house first saw me, she apprehended I was sent there to die. This apprehension, and some other personal reasons, made her very uneasy, at my having a lodging in her habitation; for though I had never spoken to my fair hostess till I entered her house, I was well acquainted with her by sight, and knew her connexions. This occasioned doubts, which afterwards proved false ones. But her chief fear was, that I should die under her roof; of which, indeed, there appeared to be the greatest probability: so much alarmed was she at this expectation, that she declared she could never stay in the house after such an event had happened.

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How weak must be the mind that indulges such timorous apprehensions! What is there in thy appearance, oh Death! which can carry terror with it to a considerate being! We know thou art the inevitable attendant on mortality; and we each of us are sensible, thou must some time or other be our sure visitor, and yet we studiously avoid every thought relative to thee.—Thy very name raises disagreeable ideas, but the sight of thee makes the generality of mankind shudder.—Death is, indeed, armed with terrors, when he seizes upon his prey in an unprepared state\*, “Unhouse’d, unanointed, unanneal’d, “no reckoning made, but sent to their account with all “their imperfections on their head.” Then, indeed, is his approach alarming; but to those who endeavour by a life of virtue and piety, to obtain the favour of the great Judge of the world, he will undoubtedly prove a certain relief from

“The whips and scorns of time;  
“Th’ oppressor’s wrong; the proud man’s contume-  
“lous; the pangs of despis’d love; the law’s delay;  
“The insolence of office; and the spurns  
“That patient merit of th’ unworthy takes;  
“With all the natural shocks that flesh is heir to.”

Mr. Bromfield, and his brother the apothecary, who attended me, and to whom I take this opportunity of returning my thanks for their care and attention, came to visit me likewise at Walcot-place. They assured the gentlewoman of the house, that she need be under no apprehensions relative to the payment of my lodgings, or any incidental expences, as there was money enough.

However, till my affairs were totally settled, it was thought advisable, that I should not make use of my own name. The first that struck me, was that of West, and which I accordingly adopted. I had, indeed, at that time no right to the name of West, not only upon ac-

\* Hamlet, Act I. Scene VIII.

† Hamlet, Act I. Scene III.



count of the legal separation which had taken place between the person to whom it had once belonged and myself, but likewise from Mr. Digges's having forfeited every pretence to the appellation, by having once more engaged at the Haymarket Theatre, under the auspices of Mr. Colman. Contrary, as you may remember, to the condition, on which alone he was expressly permitted to assume it.

When I took possession of my new lodgings, I found myself without money. Having been apprehensive of disturbing the mind of my late worthy friend, as he approached the confines of eternity, I had forbore to ask him for any for some time past, notwithstanding I knew that he had a capital sum in the hands of Mess. Drummonds, the bankers; that there was money due to him from Covent-Garden Theatre; that Mr. Foote was considerably indebted to him; and that General Calcraft owed him four hundred pounds, which I had prevailed upon Mr. Woodward to lend him; yet I rather chose to borrow money to see the *only* one of the faculty that attended him who would accept of tribute, than trouble him at that awful juncture.

Upon this occasion, the celebrated Dr. Fothergill, having heard of my distressed situation, voluntarily lent me a hundred pounds. What greatly enhanced the obligation was, my not being even personally known to him. Induced by humanity, for which the Doctor was as distinguished as for his eminent skill in his profession; and having in his youth been acquainted with some of my relations by my mother's side, who were of his own sect; as well as from the character he had heard of me from my former lively intimate the Goddess of Nonsense, but now Mary Wordley, a *teacher* and a *preacher* among the quakers, he most generously sent me the money by a gentleman who lived in Theobald's-road, by profession an apothecary, but whose name I have forgot.

This debt, as it was attended with such proofs of liberality, I was the most anxious to pay of any I owed. I had given at the time, a bond for the money, and with it a judgment; but the Doctor had too much generosity to think of entering it up. I had formerly borrowed a sum

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from Mr. Woodward, for which the upholsterer, who occasionally let my house, drew up, by way of security, an assignment of my furniture. But soon after his first illness, that worthy man delivered me up the paper containing the assignment, as a present upon his birth-day. Consequently, Dr. Fothergill was the only person who had any claim upon my property in Brewer-street.

It was not long before Solomon's ruffians took possession of the habitation which belonged to my late respected friend. Terrified almost to madness when I received the account, and doubly anxious to pay Doctor Fothergill, whose confidence claimed a preference to any other creditor; and at the same time to clear myself of the out-lawry, the very name of which shocked me beyond description; I gave a power to dispose of the whole of my furniture both in Brewer-street and Chapel-street, in order to exonerate me from those two debts. After this was done, there was some balance arising from the sale, but it was not very considerable; for as it happened to be the dead part of summer when the goods were disposed of, and most of the genteel people out of town, they were sold to manifest disadvantage.

During the first year after the decease of Mr. Woodward, I received at different times from Mr. Cornish, *fifty-nine pounds*, which was all I ever benefited by the kind intentions of my deceased friend; and even part of that was the produce of my own effects. This comparatively small sum I was obliged to be satisfied with, notwithstanding the money at Messrs. Drummonds, was immediately called in, as well as all the other monies which were due to him, to the amount of seventeen or eighteen hundred pounds. Nor were the debts of Mr. Woodward paid *immediately*, according to the letter of the will; it was at least a year and a quarter after his decease before they were settled. Mrs. Crawford has likewise been left in quiet possession of Crow-street Theatre, without a shilling being paid, of the stipulated two hundred pounds a year; though by a proper mode of procedure, the regular payment of it might have been enforced.

Thus

Thus by the refusal of the executors to comply with their deceased friend's dying request, and the strange conduct of Mr. Willet the attorney, have I been driven to distresses, even greater than those which are felt by a mendicant in the street. And this, notwithstanding I might have been furnished with a comfortable subsistence by the enjoyment of that property I had a right to expect. But I refer you to what I have already said upon the subject.

The first year after Mr. Woodward's decease, I was tolerably easy; supposing that, at the usual time, the executors would settle the affairs; in lieu of which, through the instigations of the attorney, whose views need no elucidating, they commenced a suit, without rhyme or reason, as the saying is, against Mr. Woodward's brother. Among the papers of the deceased, they found a bond and note of his, which, from having been given long ago, had many years interest upon it. It amounted, together, to a sum that would nearly swallow up the legacy left him.

I am well assured, from the knowledge I have of my friend's humane disposition, and great dislike to every species of duplicity, that the bond was never intended to be put in force; and Mr. Cornish so far coincided with me in opinion, that he promised me it should *be given up*; but this was over-ruled by the person, who foresaw the advantages that would arise from a law-suit. I apprehend the reason of the bond's being kept by Mr. Woodward was, to prevent, in case of his brother's death, his wife or heirs from being benefited; for his brother had married a person whom he much disliked. And so greatly had his marriage offended him, that it was with the utmost difficulty I could prevail upon him ever to see or speak to him.

It certainly could not be meant, as the will was so recently made, that the legacy should be only a nominal one, as it would have been, had so large a sum been deducted out of it. Mr. Woodward was above such duplicity and vain ostentation. And I must add, that I cannot help thinking, though I am not conversant in the law, that as I was the only legatee, and who alone could be injured



injured by it, my desire of giving up the bond and note, would have been a sufficient inducement for the executors to consent to it, and a sufficient authority for their doing it. But this mode of settling it, would not have been so advantageous to Mr. Willet. The sweets of a suit of law would have been nipped in the bud; and he could have found no excuse to prevent his *refunding*; a term which grates upon the ear of most of the gentlemen of his profession.

I lived a year and a quarter at Walcot-Place, in the lodging that had been provided for me, and a very expensive one it was, exclusive of my man and maid-servant. To support this, I borrowed money upon my plate, and disposed of the few jewels I had left. As I had long secluded myself from the world, the only acquaintance I kept up, was one female intimate, who resided in town, and the family where I lodged.

Thus step by step, with more or less celerity, according as circumstances vary, do those, who by their own imprudence, the villainy of others, or the wanton attacks of fortune, are driven from the elevated brow of prosperity, descend into the vale of adversity. Steep and slippery is the road; and seldom, very seldom, are the pristine heights to be recovered: and the uncertainty of, when we have reached the bottom, adds to the horror of the descent.

G. A. B.

## LETTER XCV.

January 29, 17—.

**M**Y youngest son now came from France upon his being of age; and my eldest son got leave of absence, in order to return to England upon the same occasion. When they met, and took into consideration the settlement of some of the debts they were mutually engaged for, an unhappy disagreement arose between them. My son Calcraft insisted that he would not pay one of the contracts, because it was usurious: he would only agree to return the principal with five per cent. interest. It was in vain that Captain Merham argued its being the usual mode

mode of lending money in such cases of exigence, and urged the necessity there was for submitting to the terms, however grating. This dispute on the subject arose to such a height, that a duel was nearly the consequence; and nothing but my tears and entreaties could have prevented it. What a dreadful situation for a mother, who doated upon her sons, and whose happiness could alone afford her any consolation.

Will you pardon me (yet why do I ask the question? I know you will) if I repeat a few lines from a part I have often performed, and when I performed have most susceptible *felt*? But never do I recollect, that they struck me with greater force than on the present occasion; they are part of the wailings of Constance, when she laments the loss of her beloved son. For the whole of the beautiful and affecting scenes, I refer you to the piece. And not much short of her's would have been my grief, had I been robbed of either of my sons by this unnatural contest; I then should have said with her\*,

"Grief fills the room up of my absent child;  
 "Lies in his bed; walks up and down with me;  
 "Puts on his pleasing looks; repeats his words;  
 "Remembers me of all his gracious parts;  
 "Stuffs out his vacant garments with his form:  
 "Then have I reason to be fond of grief."

In a short time after his arrival in England, my youngest son unfortunately fell into the hands of sharpers, and lost very large sums at play. It therefore became necessary that he should go abroad. He accordingly, thro' the interest of a friend, got a commission in the service of the East-India Company at Bengal; as I was every hour in expectation of having my affairs settled, and being put in possession of what Mr. Woodward had left me, and as Captain Metham supplied me with what money I wanted for the present, I had no occasion to solicit any assistance from him at that time.

\* King John, A& III. Scene VI.

Just

Just before he sailed, he called upon me, and appointed the Sunday following to meet his brother at my apartments; but from some reason I could never ascertain, he did not fulfil the engagement. Indeed, I have been since informed, that it arose from jealousy, of my having a greater affection for his brother than himself, through my refusing him some portraits which I had promised to my eldest son. I am told he has met with the greatest success in his negotiations at Indostan, and is soon expected home; should this happily take place, I form the most sanguine hopes, from that fondness he always expressed for me.

Captain Metham, during his stay here, contracted a friendship with a brother officer, a man dissipated in the extreme; they lent each other their names, and as this gentleman was possessed of an estate, though it was greatly involved, it was not difficult to raise money upon their joint security; but, as is frequently the case in these negotiations, they seldom got more than forty pounds in cash for their notes of an hundred. The consequence of this manner of going on was, that my son soon found himself greatly entangled, and obliged to return to Jamaica.

Just before he went, a beautiful young creature called upon me with a letter from him; which, as my affording the mistress of my son protection, might appear to you and the world, as if I countenanced his illicit connections, and draw on me an additional load of censure, I shall transcribe verbatim.

“ My Dear Madam,

“ LET my situation plead my excuse for this. It is  
 “ to introduce to you a young woman, whose greatest  
 “ fault is an attachment to your son. I have no resource  
 “ left, but to rely upon my father’s generosity; a faint  
 “ but only hope. But though I cannot count upon his  
 “ protection, I can upon your’s; who are too good, and  
 “ have too much sense to be offended when I tell  
 “ you, *that at this time she is entitled to my tenderest re-*  
 “ *gards.*

“ My



"My circumstances are such, that I could not even call on you before I go; but I hope a few years will amply compensate for the misfortunes of this; and that we may both live, till I have proved in numberless instances, with what truth I am

"Your most affectionate and dutiful son,

"George Montgomery Metham."

"London, Dec. 22, 1778.

"My birth-day."

My circumstances at this time were not in the most flourishing state, but in consideration of my son's request, and the young person's situation, I promised to allow her a weekly pittance, as long as I could afford to do so. This, however, it was not in my power to do but for a few weeks.

At the expiration of the time usually limited for executors to settle the affairs entrusted to their care, a trust of the most sacred and important nature, I waited on Mr. Woodward's to know what had been done. When, to my inexpressible astonishment, I was informed, that there was no money for me, nor the least room for me to expect any. They added, that I must apply to Mr. Willet their attorney; as they were determined to be guided wholly by him, and being resolved not to act themselves, *they had given their power up to him.*

Having met with this unexpected rebuff, I prevailed upon a friend of Mr. Woodward's to call on Mr. Bromfield, but he would not hear what he had to say. I wrote repeatedly to him with as little effect, my letters being referred to Mr. Willet; at length driven by distress, I called at the house of the latter, where I was treated with an insolence I never before experienced.

He informed me, that he had proceeded against Mr. Crawford till he had got execution against him; and upon my representing that the warrants to the bonds were in the hands of Mr. Burton of Dublin, he insolently replied, that indeed he would not cross the herring-pond; upon my asking him when he thought I might expect any advantage, he told me, I had nothing to expect; that the

the executors had as good a right as myself to the effects, if there were any; as I should squander it all away, supposing any advantages were to arise to me.

It was in vain for me to remonstrate with a person who could have the effrontery to tell me this; what was to be done I knew not. Mr. Cornish by this time had retired from business into the country; and Mr. Bromfield still persisted, in not listening either to personal applications or letters; or, if he did, I received the usual reference to one from whom I had nothing to expect.

Thus were my hopes from this quarter, from which I had the most rational grounds of expectation, according to my usual ill fortune, frustrated; and that, like many of the former, not through any misconduct of my own; this consideration affords me great comfort amidst my distresses, and gives me room to hope, that the application I made in my last letter to the gentlemen of the law, will not prove ineffectual, but procure me from among them some humane and powerful protection.

Finding my distresses through this disappointment become serious, I discharged my man servant, which I did with reluctance, as he was very faithful, and had lived with me a considerable time; I likewise gave up the apartments I occupied at first, and went into an upper room in the same house, as I was unable to pay what was already due.

My son Metham had promised to send me money from Jamaica, but I could not expect to receive it for some time; I found myself greatly distressed, as I had borrowed money from Mr. Woodward's brother, with the sure expectation of being able to repay it at the expiration of the year. The faithful girl who attended me would not leave me, and rather chose to share my distress; besides all these disagreeable circumstances, I had contracted a debt at a shop in the neighbourhood, that supplied me with every necessary except bread and meat: I had given a note for the sum, which was now become due, and for which I was threatened with confinement; this was a double distress to us, as it deprived us of the greatest part of our subsistence, and reduced us to the utmost extremity of want.

I had

I had now parted with every thing that I could raise a shilling upon: and poverty, with all her horrid train of evils, stared me in the face. In this dreadful situation, worn out with calamity, and terrified with the gloomy prospect which presented itself to my view, I endeavoured to persuade myself that suicide could not be a crime: I had no person to look up to; every body to whom I was united by the ties of blood, were abroad; Sir George Metham had presented me with a temporary relief; but he, as well as all the nobility, were out of town; not being possessed (as I thought) of a shilling, nor the expectation of getting one; oppressed by debt; without the common necessities of life; an useless member of society; and the poor girl who had kindly involved herself in my distress, being an aggravation of it; I taught myself to believe, that it would be a meritorious action to free myself from being, any longer, the burthen I was to the world and myself. I accordingly formed the resolution to put an end to my existence, by throwing myself into the Thames.

Unhappily in this moment of despair, every spark of that virtuous confidence in heaven, so forcibly recommended in the following lines, was extinguished in my bosom\*.

“Tho’ plung’d in ills, and exercised in care,  
 “Yet never let the noble mind despair:  
 “When press’d by dangers, and beset with foes,  
 “The gods their timely succour interpose;  
 “And when our virtue sinks, o’erwhelm’d with grief,  
 “By unforeseen expedients bring relief.”

Inspired by the black ideas which had got possession of my mind, I one night left the house between nine and ten o’clock. As there was a door which led from the garden into the road, I went out unperceived; for I had not resolution to speak to my faithful attendant, whose anxious eye might have discovered the direful purpose of my heart impressed upon my countenance.

\* Phillips.

Having



Having effected, unobserved, my elopement, I wandered about the road and fields, till the clock was on the point of striking eleven, and then made my way towards Westminster bridge. I continued to rove about till that hour, as there was then a probability that I should not be interrupted by any passengers from carrying my desperate design into execution. Indeed, I was not without hopes of meeting in Saint George's Fields with some Freebooters, who would have prevented the deed of desperation I was about to perpetrate, by taking a life I was weary of. Nor would this have been an improbable expectation, had I met with any of those lawless plunderers, that oftentimes frequent those parts; for their disappointment from finding me penniless, might have excited them to murder me; a consummation I then devoutly wished.

Having reached the Bridge, I descended the steps of the landing-place, with a sad and solemn pace, and sat me down on the lowest stair, impatiently waiting for the tide to cover me. My desperation, though resolute, was not of that violent kind as to urge me to take the fatal plunge. As I sat, I fervently recommended my spirit to that Being I was going to offend in so unwarrantable a manner, by not bearing patiently the afflictions he was pleased I should suffer. I even dared to harbour the thought, that a divine impulse had given rise to the idea; as if "the Everlasting had not fixed his cannon 'gainst self-slaughter!"

The moon beamed faintly through the clouds, and gave just light enough to distinguish any passenger who might cross the bridge; but as I was in mourning, there was not any great probability of my being discerned and interrupted. I had taken off my bonnet and apron, and laid them beside me upon the stairs; and leaning my head upon my hands, remained lost in thought, and almost stupified by sorrow, and the reflections which crowded upon my mind.

Here pause a moment, and admire with me the strange vicissitudes of life. Behold your once lovely friend, reduced from the enjoyment of ease, affluence, esteem, and renown in her profession, to the most desperate state that human

human wretchedness will admit of—a prey to penury, grief, contumely, and despair—standing tiptoe on the verge of this world, and impiously daring to rush, *unbidden*, into the presence of her Creator—I shudder at the recollection—Let me draw a veil across it, and proceed.

In the pensive posture just described, did I sit for some minutes watching the gently swelling tide, and blaming its tardy approach. When it pleased “the unseen power” (to express myself in the words of Thomson) that rules “the illimitable world, that guides its motions, from the “brightest star, to the least dust of this sin-tainted mold,” to interfere and snatch me from destruction.

I was suddenly roused from my awful reverie, by the voice of a woman at some little distance, addressing her child; as appeared from what followed, for they were neither of them visible. In a soft plaintive tone she said, “How, my dear, can you cry to me for bread, when you “know I have not even a morsel to carry your dying father?” She then exclaimed, in all the bitterness of woe, “My God! my God! what wretchedness can compare to mine! *But thy almighty will be done.*”

The concluding words of the woman’s pathetic exclamation communicated instantaneously, like the electric spark, to my desponding heart. I felt the full force of the divine admonition; and struck with horror at the crime I had intentionally committed, I burst into tears; repeating in a sincere ejaculation, the pious sentence she had uttered, “*thy almighty will be done!*”

As I put my hand into my pocket, to take out my handkerchief in order to dry my tears, I felt some halfpence there which I did not know I was possessed of; and now my native humanity, which had been depressed, as well as every other good propensity, by despair, found means to resume its power in my mind. Impelled by its pleasing influence, I hastily ran up the steps, and having discovered my hitherto invisible mistress, gave them to her. I received in return a thousand blessings; to which I rather thought she had a right from me, for having been the means of obstructing my dire intents.

I now returned to the place where the impious scene was to have been acted, and humbly adored that Being, who

who had by such an eventual circumstance counteracted it; and for the first and last time in my life, felt a sensation of happiness from finding there were persons in the world more wretched than myself. I dare say my much respected \* Thomson's description of the miseries of human life, will here occur to your recollection, as they do to mine on a review of the incident.

" Ah little do the gay, licentious, proud,  
 " Whom pleasure, power, and affluence surround;  
 " They who their thoughtless hours in giddy mirth,  
 " And wanton, often cruel, riot waste;  
 " Ah little think they, while they dance along,  
 " How many feel, this very moment death  
 " And all the sad variety of pain:  
 " How many sink in the devouring flood,  
 " Or more devouring flame: how many bleed  
 " By shameful variance betwixt man and man:  
 " How many pine in want, and dungeon glooms;  
 " Shut from the common air, and common use  
 " Of their own limbs: how many drink the cup  
 " Of baleful grief, or eat the bitter bread of misery."——

I am apprehensive I shall tire you with this melancholy account of the extreme of despair, into which your poor fallen friend was thus plunged. And yet I flatter myself, that an event so interesting to me, will not be considered as uninteresting to you. I will, however, think about bringing it to a conclusion, and with it conclude this proportionably long letter.

Whilst I compared my own situation with that of the poor woman, whose starving child and dying husband occasioned her to vent so pungently her grief, I received great satisfaction from considering, that all those who were dear to me, as well from affection as the ties of blood, were in prosperous circumstances. I had no one to care for, but the poor girl whose affection kept her with me, and whom I regarded as my child. Having therefore adored

\* Thomson's Winter, Line 322.



the great Source of Good, for my recent deliverance from the fatal effects of my despondency, I prayed that he would pardon the atrocious attempt; and concluded my petition, with begging that he would grant me power to assist her, and make her future days more comfortable.

Having done this, I remounted the steps, and found my mind inexpressibly relieved. The gloom which had so lately overwhelmed it, was in an instant cleared away, and a tranquillity I had long been a stranger to, succeeded it. Such a sudden transition from the blackest despair to peace and hope, I was well assured could only have been effected by some invisible agent; for I never felt such a ray of comfort diffuse itself through my heart, since those blessed days of innocence I spent in my much regretted convent. "It came o'er my mind," (as the immortal bard \* describes the power of music) "like the sweet south, that breathes upon a bank of violets, stealing and giving odour."

G. A. B.

## LETTER XCVI.

February 8, 17—

**H**AVING offered up my adorations to Heaven, with a fervour I had scarcely ever experienced before, I returned home: When I got in, I found my poor Sally crying as if her heart would break, lest some misfortune had happened me. The faithful girl was, however, soon restored to quiet, by observing the gloom, which had lately been so apparent in my looks dispelled; and tranquillity seemingly restored to my distracted bosom. She informed me, that during my absence, her sister had called upon her, and had lent her two shillings; with this she had been out, and bought something she thought I should like for supper, and some tea and sugar for the morning.

When supper was got ready, we sat down together to our repast, with thankful hearts; for she was become

\* Twelfth Night, A. 1. Scene I.

more

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more a humble friend than a servant; and I cannot remember, even in the most elevated situation I was ever in, and when my table was spread with dainties, that I made a more pleasing meal. The goodness of the poor girl's heart was so evident, in her waiting patiently for my return, to partake of what she had provided, notwithstanding she had been long fasting; and gave me such an incontrovertible proof of her affection, that it greatly added to my regard for her; and I then resolved, if I was ever blest with the power, amply to return it.

So interested and lukewarm is the service of domestics, in general, to their masters and mistresses, that when their attendance appears to be tinged with regard as well as duty, they claim every indulgence their station will admit of, and become invaluable. To shew my approbation of the considerate girl's attention, I gave her leave to pass the following day with her sister, who had called to invite her; and I was not displeased at her having such an opportunity of regaling herself, as no part of the supply she had furnished me with remained but the tea and sugar.

As I sat ruminating, after she was gone, upon my late intended rashness, I heard a gentle tap at the door. Since I had removed to the Attic story, I had, through a false pride, avoided seeing any of those who had known me in a better situation; my surprise therefore was very great, at beholding Madam Krudnar enter, and more particularly so, as a difference subsisted at that time between a relation of her's and myself. This lady is the widow of a Polish baron, a most agreeable generous woman, and possessed of the most liberal sentiments.

She had accidentally heard of my distress, and taken the first opportunity to come and relieve me; she gently chid me for concealing my situation from my acquaintance, as my being reduced to my present extremity, did not proceed from my own misconduct, but was occasioned in a great measure by the barbarity of the lawyer, who had wantonly expended my property in unnecessary suits of law. She observed, upon my relating to her my situation, that the debts I had contracted, were in consequence

quence of the supposition, that I should be possessed of an income more than adequate to my expences.

As it was Sunday when Madam Krudnar called upon me, and my maid was gone out, it was impracticable for me to get any other refreshment for her, than the tea which I fortunately had by me; and with this I entertained my benevolent patroness.

Being much indisposed from the vexation and anxiety I had undergone, I now lay longer in bed than I usually had done; the house was remarkably quiet, there being no other lodgers in it: Mr. Willets, the person to whom it belonged, was always in the garden when at home; and his spouse was generally abroad, in a great measure, I believe, to be out of the way, that she might avoid seeing misery, which she had neither the power nor the inclination to relieve.

This was the state of the house where I lodged. When two or three days after the fair visitant, I have given you an account of, had honoured me with her company, I heard, in the morning, repeated knockings at the door; upon enquiring into the cause of such unusual noise, I found that it proceeded from a number of persons who were sent to assist me; but having carefully secreted myself, as I have already informed you, from the world, since adversity had been my portion, I could by no means account for these benefactions.

Among others, Mr. Harris did me the honour to call upon me; he kindly enquired, why I had not acquainted the managers of Covent-Garden with my distress; and presenting me with five guineas, desired I would place that trifle to the account, which I took as a genteel way of making me a present of it: I must inform you, that I am indebted to the managers of Covent-garden Theatre, in thirty or five and thirty pounds, and to Mr. Harris twenty.

The same day I received a visit from a female, for whom I have a very great regard: This was Mrs. Whitfield, the daughter of Nurse Carter, whom I have already mentioned as my dresser for some years; she came with a deputation from Mr. Hull and Mr. Mattocks, offering their joint endeavours to raise a sum, in order to extricate



extricate me from the debts which oppressed me: I need not say, that I readily accepted their generous assistance, and esteemed myself much flattered by such a mark of kindness from the community to which I had formerly belonged.

Upon my accepting the foregoing offer, Mrs. Whitfield made me one from herself; which, at the same time that it shewed her humane disposition, gave proofs of the greatest discretion and judgment. She proposed, if I would grant my consent, that she would endeavour to raise a sum among her own acquaintance and friends, and from it pay me a guinea a week. This proposal, you may be assured, I also gladly accepted, as it would be a prevention not only of want, but of what is infinitely more to be dreaded, *debt*, which, in my opinion, is the earthly Tartarus.

When a person whose principles are good, unhappily falls into this situation, adieu to all peace and comfort; the reflection embitters every meal, and drives from the eye-lids refreshing sleep; it corrodes and cankers every cheerful idea, and like a stern Cerberus, guards each avenue to the heart, so that pleasure dares not approach.

—Happy! thrice happy! are those, who are blest with an independent competence, and can confine their wants within the bounds of that competence, be it what it may; to such alone the bread of life is palatable and nourishing. Sweet is the morsel that is acquired by an honest industry, the produce of which is permanent, or that flows from a source which will not fail; a subsistence that is precarious, or procured by an uncertain prospect of payment, carries neither wine nor oil with it. —Let me therefore again repeat, that the person who is deeply involved in debt, experiences on earth all the tortures the poets describe to be the lot of the wretched inhabitants of Tartarus.

I was naturally led to enquire, how the knowledge of my present distressed situation had found its way into the world; when I was informed, that an advertisement had appeared in the public papers, the day before, to the following purport: "That the female *Timon* was in want of the necessaries of life, and those who had formerly

"partaken of her prosperity, ought to blush at suffering her to be in such a situation." My address was subjoined, which brought the benefactions so readily to me.

The performers could not be induced by this intelligence to make me the kind proposal they did, as none of them ever lay under any obligation to me, except Sparks; and he had for some years been sleeping with his fathers. But though many, incited by the advertisement, pitied my distressed situation, yet among all the persons I had formerly obliged, there was but *one* who felt the rebuke. So very scarce an article, as I have already observed, is gratitude.

I soon had another visit from my fair friend Madam Krudnar, who was quite charmed to hear that her manœuvre had proved so successful; for to her I now found, I was indebted for the discovery of my distress. She congratulated me upon it; but not without reproaching me once more with pride, for keeping my poverty secret. In a short time, I received a sum from the Theatre, which enabled me to pay most of the debts I had been obliged by hard necessity to contract; and for some time the guinea per week, which Mrs. Whitfield raised for me, continued; indeed, much longer than I had reason to expect.

I was now favoured with a visit from the justly celebrated Mrs. Abington, who advised me to take a benefit, and kindly offered her talents.---She at the same time lent me her name to a draft for eleven pounds; for which I hold myself as much indebted to her, as if she had made me a present of the money. The anxiety I experienced till the bill was paid, was inexpressible; but I was enabled to pay it when due, by the kind assistance of a gentleman who formerly belonged to the Nonsense-Club I have given an account of. Mr. King and Mr. Smith likewise kindly offered to play for me; but as the season was far advanced, it was thought adviseable to postpone it till the next.

At this period I recollected, that I never had received any consideration for the fixtures in Brewer-street house. I therefore applied to Pollard the upholsterer, who had disposed of them, and was informed by him, that he had paid

paid the produce of them into the hands of Mr. Woodward's executors. But upon my examining Mr. Cornish's account, I found that no such money had been received from him; upon which I desired Mr. Willets, the person at whose house I lodged, to call on him; when he still insisted upon the truth of his first assertion, and stood in it, that he did not owe me a shilling. Incensed to a degree, at the supposition of my being so unprincipled as to make a demand where I had not a legal claim, I commenced a process against Pollard; and though I had the satisfaction to gain my cause, I would not undergo what I suffered from employing such means to recover the money, for ten times the sum.

Isaac Bickerstaff, in one of his Lucubrations, says, that in most villages there is a Mrs. Bluemantle, a tattling gossip, who makes it her business to collect all the news of the place; and when she dispenses it abroad, takes care to decorate it with not a few additions and emendations, which owe their being to her own prolific brain. During my residence at Walcot-place, I experienced, to my sorrow, that a Mrs. Bluemantle resided in that neighbourhood.

A person who is married to a man of a genteel profession in London, and has pitched upon that spot for her country residence, did me the honour to notice me whilst there. She amused herself with repeating stories of my extravagance, at the time that I actually wanted the necessaries of life, and was confined to my bed by a severe indisposition occasioned by fretting. It is much to be lamented, that these pests of society are not liable to some punishment: for though an action of damages might not lie against them, they often do as much real injury to such as are unhappy enough to become the subject of their strictures, as those who are more unguarded in their mode of expression.

I severely experienced the truth of this; as a gentleman informed me some time after, that he certainly should have assisted me in my distress, had he not accidentally fallen in with this kind and intelligent neighbour of mine, who assured him there was no truth in the report of my being distressed, as I had every day *my bottle and my bird*.



I insert this circumstance, in hopes, after it has undergone your inspection, of its falling into the hands of my calumniator's daughter; as that young lady probably has books from a circulating library, and these letters may probably be honoured with a place in most of their catalogues, there is a chance of her reading them. If she does, I should take it as a favour if she would inform the worthy Mrs. Bluemantle (who is generally too busily employed about other people's affairs, to have leisure to read herself) that I have heard of her great goodness, but hold her calumny in the most sovereign contempt. I have charity enough to hope that Miss, who seems to have no very great opinion of her Mamma, will avoid an imitation of so contemptible a character, and take care not to deserve the denomination I have, with the greatest propriety, bestowed upon her mother.

Had I the power of naming the punishment which should be inflicted for such a breach of the laws of truth and humanity, I would propose depriving them of the member by which they propagate their inhuman falsehoods. Though this infliction might appear a severe one, it certainly is not more than adequate to the crime. In my estimation, it is of the highest magnitude. To repeat stories to the disadvantage of others, even if they are true, is wrong; but to *invent* falsehoods wantonly to injure them, certainly requires exemplary punishment.

But were the lovers of scandal to be deprived of their tongues, they would make use of their hands to indulge their beloved propensity. When they could no longer speak, they would write their censures; and were they deprived of the power of expressing their malignity by these methods, they, like Lavinia, would write with stumps upon the sand, rather than let their neighbours live without calumny.

Finely expressive of my ideas on this head, is the complaint of the poor injured Arethusa in \* Philaster; which, with the alteration of the word *maiden* into *person* to make it more extensively applicable, I will beg leave to insert for your perusal.

\* Philaster, Act III. Scene the last.

“ Where

" Where may a *person* live securely free,  
 " Keeping their honour safe? Not with the living;  
 " They feed upon opinions, errors, dreams,  
 " And make them truths; they draw a nourishment  
 " Out of defamings; grow upon disgraces;  
 " And when they see a virtue fortified  
 " Strongly above the battery of their tongues,  
 " Oh, how they cast to sink it; and defeated,  
 " (Soul-sick with poison) strike the monuments  
 " Where noble names lie sleeping, till they sweat,  
 " And the cold marble melts."

You may probably think me too warm in my censures of defamation, falshood, and duplicity, those human failings that are so discordant to the natural bent of my own mind.—But, as I have before told you (and I believe more than once) that every part of my conduct is generally in the extreme, so neither can I feel or express my approbation or disapprobation in lukewarm terms.—There is a fervour in my manner I cannot controul; and I always speak or write of an action, according to the degree of pleasure or disgust I receive from it.

G. A. B.

## LETTER XCVII.

Feb. 16, 17—

**A**S Mr. Willets, my landlord, had let the greatest part of the house to a large family, I found it very inconvenient to remain any longer at Walcot-Place; I therefore came to town, and fixed my residence in the house where I at present lodge.

I presumed to acquaint his Grace of Montague with my distress, who immediately honoured me with a temporary relief; and I have upon several occasions, been favoured with marks of his Grace's munificence; but these would not enable me to subsist without contracting debts.

I had applied to some persons who were connected with Sir George Metham, but without success. I now made

application to himself, and informed him of the distressed situation I was in. I had, however, in return, only a reproachful letter, pointing out the impropriety of requesting pecuniary favours. As I never knew a pleasure equal to assisting those in distress, when I had it in my power, I thought that others had the same feelings. But alas! how few are blest with the benevolent minds of a Montague or a Spencer\*, with whose bounty I am proud of having been frequently honoured.

As I had received such incontestible proofs of regard from my contemporaries, I thought I might succeed in a benefit. Indeed, the idea was first suggested to me by Lady Lumm. I accordingly applied to Mr. Harris, who, with a generosity to which I hold myself much obliged, not only granted me the house, free from the incidental expences, but made use of his interest with the performers; who, one and all, cheerfully lent me their talents, to which I acknowledge myself ever indebted.

It was advised by some persons who professed a regard for me, that I should appear myself. Though an absence of six or seven years from the theatre, agitated my mind with all the apprehensions of a new performer; yet when my name was once advertised, it was not in my power to recede. And so extremely apprehensive was I, the night of the performance, that I would readily have given up all the advantages I expected to arise from it, to have been excused performing, notwithstanding they were infinitely greater than my most sanguine hopes could represent them to be. This in a great measure was owing to Mrs. Yates's appearance after a long indisposition.

I was so much intimidated when I was about to make my entrée, that I believe I should not have had courage to have gone upon the stage, had not Miss Catley, in a manner, forced me on. To this lady I am much indebted, for the lively satisfaction she expressed at seeing a theatre crowded by the first and most distinguished of the nobility in the month of June. Had the house been thus filled for her own benefit, she could not have betrayed more genuine marks of pleasure. They afforded a con-

\* The late Earl.



vincing proof of the goodness of her heart, I had quitted the theatre before her return from Ireland, and consequently was unknown to her.

The state of Mrs. Yates's health was so doubtful, that I was apprehensive she would not have been able to perform. But the goodness she possesses made her run every risque, to assist a sister of the profession in distress. She appeared, amidst the plaudits of a splendid audience, in her justly admired character of Jane Shore. To this play was added "Comus," in which every performer endeavoured to excel. And they fully convinced the house, that they received a sensible pleasure from the opportunity they had, of paying a compliment of their talents upon so humane an occasion.

As to my own exhibition, I believe it was very mediocre. And I hope I shall gain credit when I assert, as I do, that, to this hour, I do not know how I got through my part; which was, as usual, that of Alicia. Fear had taken such full possession of me, that it prevented me from returning my thanks to the audience, and particularly to my patronesses, for the distinguished honour they had done me, in a short address I had prepared for that purpose.

The weather was uncommonly warm, which made it the more extraordinary, to have a theatre crowded by beauties of the first distinction. Her Grace of Bolton, in the honour of whose patronage I have always exulted, regardless of the weather, filled her boxes, as if it had been the depth of winter. I was so fortunate as to have my benefit over, the eve of the unhappy riots.

The young woman who had been recommended by my eldest son to me for assistance, had persuaded me to join with her in a note of hand at six months date, in order to discharge a debt she had contracted. This note had been some time due, but I prevailed upon the holder to keep it till my benefit, when it was paid; as was likewise every shilling of the emoluments I received from it. Though I could ill spare the money to pay this note, in my present situation, yet being in daily expectation of hearing from my son, or at least of being reimbursed by the young wo-

man

man herself, when she received the allowance he had appointed her before he went, I kept up my spirits.

And this I did the more readily, as his excellency Comte Haflang had promised to assist me till my affairs were settled, by allowing me a small sum monthly. The promised stipend was regularly paid me, for a short time after I removed into Duke-street; but his lordship being attacked by a severe illness, I received a letter from him informing me, that the expences incidental to his indisposition, put it out of his power to perform his promise at that time, but on a future day I should receive it. What made this disappointment the greater was, my being laid up with a fit of the rheumatism, which had confined me to my bed for some weeks, and rendered me unable to get up but to have the bed made.

Whilst I lay in this situation, a person whom I had known formerly in a genteel line of business, but had not seen for years, called upon me. She came, *as she said*, to request I would give my opinion upon the abilities of a young gentlewoman, whom she imagined had talents for the stage, and wished to appear in Juliet. I told her it was impossible, in the situation she then saw me, to comply with her request; but as soon as I was able to leave my room, I would send her word, if she would favour me with her address.

Having received this answer, she withdrew, desiring me to drink Madeira. Upon my frankly replying, that Madeira was a wine I could by no means afford, she begged I would permit her to send me a few bottles, as the lady she wished to introduce to me had some particularly good. I thanked her. She took her leave; and I thought no more of my visitant or her wine, till I was informed that a boy had brought some Madeira from Mrs. S—, with her compliments. He told the maid he would call for the basket the next day. Hearing this, I bid her inform me when the boy came, that I might send a card of thanks, and reward him for his trouble.

Accordingly, the next evening I was told he was below. But behold, whilst I was giving the girl the gratification I intended for the boy, two fellows rushed into the room, and acquainted me they had an action for a very considerable

considerable sum against me; adding, that I must immediately get up and go with them. I requested to know the name of the creditor that had taken such a step. They informed me, and added, that the debt was for linen drapery. I assured them that I knew no such person, nor had I for years bought any article of that kind, but from Mr. Evans of Mary-le-bone-street. It was in vain that I remonstrated; the debt, they said, was sworn to; and they had even the audacity to tell me, that if I had bail ready, they had particular orders not to take it.

I represented my condition, but they were inflexible. I was therefore obliged to make a virtue of necessity, and yield to their authority. I then requested they would permit me to rise, without their being present. To this they at length complied, but not without enjoining me to be expeditious, as they were in haste, and I must be so too. No words can describe my feelings upon this occasion. To be exposed to such brutality, without having furnished any legal pretence for it, was shocking beyond conception. My poor faithful girl was so terrified, that she greatly added to my distress; for though accustomed to misfortune, nothing of a similar kind to this had she as yet been witness to.

The fellows ridiculed her feelings; and having planted themselves at each door, during the time I was getting up, they there gave way to their mirth. In their conversation, they mentioned the name of the female that had visited me the preceding day. In a moment the duplicity of the woman struck me with all its force. The intent of her visit was now disclosed. The pretended Juliet, the present of the Madeira, and the calling again for the basket, were all now plainly discoverable to be only preparatory steps to the oppressive scene that was acting. Confounded at such treachery, I could scarcely believe my senses; especially as she was a Scotch woman, a country whose natives are in general blessed with sincerity as well as honesty: nor was it possible to account for such an act of barbarity towards a person, who had formerly shewn her many civilities; towards one who never intentionally injured another, even in thought; and whose situation would claim



claim compassion from any being, possessed of a spark of humanity.

As soon as I could get myself ready, I entered the coach with my honourable attendants, who escorted me to Armstrong's in Carey-street. The confidence of its being a false debt supported me: but when I heard the name of the solicitor who had taken out the writ, I guessed at the design of it. Being indebted in a very large sum to Mr. Stacie at the Bedford Arms, which I was security for my son, Captain Metham, before he went to Jamaica, I had demanded of this attorney a bond, sent to his late father, in order to make an assignment of it to Mr. Stacie.

I therefore sent immediately to Mr. Stacie, who soon came with his attorney, and having engaged to the officer for my appearance, I returned home without the attendance of my gentlemen ushers. My little girl felt inexpressible satisfaction at seeing me; and I had the pleasure to find, that the cause of my absence had not been suspected by any person in the house. The mistress of it was confined to her bed; her husband was in Italy; and I had been as much alarmed lest she should be frightened at so critical a time, as I was at the disagreeable predicament in which I had stood.

As the writ was soon returnable, and it was not in my power to procure bail sufficient for so large a sum, I had no recourse but to give my name into the office of the court of King's Bench: for not being willing to plead the privilege I was entitled to from Comte Haslang, to a debt of *any kind*, much less to one I did *not owe*, I determined to stand trial. I was the more induced to do this, as the affair began to unravel itself; by which I found, that the unhappy woman my youngest son had formerly connected himself with, in conjunction with another person, had prevailed upon an ignorant Irishman, who was never worth ten pounds in his life, to swear that I was indebted to him a sum, that he and all his ancestors, from their situation, could never have been possessed of.

This unwarrantable manœuvre I apprehend, was intended to *intimidate* me, so as to get from me a receipt for the bond; for my situation, at that juncture, made it extremely

trremely hazardous for me even to change my apartment. The dread of fatal consequences, they imagined would induce me to purchase my liberty at any price: I must here inform you, that the bond in question was given by the relation I have already mentioned, who I brought up from a child, for money borrowed of Mr. Woodward, upon his going to the East-Indies.

If you will refer to one of my former letters, I forget which, you will see, that upon my nephew's going abroad, through the interest procured him by Mr. Hoole, Mr. Woodward advanced him eighty odd pounds for the completion of his equipment: a bond was given for that sum by the young gentleman, but, at Mr. Woodward's express desire, was made out in my name; and he would never accept of it, as I have reason to believe, lest it should fall into any other person's hands but my own, who he was sure would not sue for it. This could be the only reason for his refusal, as he so strenuously insisted upon my keeping it.

As Mr. Stacie, upon many occasions, had been very obliging to the young men of my family, as well as to myself, I thought the assignment of this bond to him as a counter security towards the payment of Captain Metham's debt, was the only means I had, at the time, to prove to him, that though I was deprived of the ability to do him justice, I did not want inclination; the bond was accordingly sent to this attorney's father, who was one of Mr. Woodward's solicitors, to be assigned over to Mr. Stacie: but that not having been done, I wrote to the son, to require it should be immediately delivered up, and in so peremptory a manner, that I have great reason to believe this arrest was fabricated, in order to terrify me to give a receipt for the bond: there does not appear to be any other inducement for the cruel treatment I received.

Do you ever recollect reading a scene of greater cruelty in a civilized country, than that I have just recited? That a person who had, as Orlando says, "looked on better days; had sat at good men's feasts; had from her eyelids often wiped a tear, and knew what 'twas to

As you like it, Act. II. Scene VIII.

"pity

"pity and be pitied;" should be dragged out of her bed, whilst labouring under a painful indisposition, and hurried, in an ignominious manner, to a place of confinement, at the hazard of her life, and this without any just pretence; is an incident that almost exceeds belief, and disgraces the country where the act was committed.

The many instances I have given you in the course of my story, of the villainy of mankind, will, I fear, degrade human nature in your estimation.—But Heaven forbid, that my hard lot should be the lot of *many* of my sex!—It is true, I have experienced the most unkind, ungrateful, and villainous treatment, from some of both sexes; nor have I yet finished the tale of them: but I will charitably hope that my case is a singular one; and that people in general pass through life, without meeting with so many proofs of the degeneracy of their fellow-creatures as I have done.

G. A. B.

#### LETTER XCVIII.

Feb. 22, 17—

**A**T the conclusion of the season, I made application to Mr. Younger, acting manager of Drury-lane, to request that the proprietors would grant me a number of tickets; as I could by no means expect the same indulgence either from patentees or performers, I had experienced the year before at Covent-Garden. They were immediately granted; and the late Earl Spencer requesting his lady to honour me with her patronage, in addition to my former patronesses, I met with the success I hoped for.

My not hearing from Captain Metham grieved me much; but this did not arise from the distresses I encountered; these were but trifling considerations, when put in competition with a mother's apprehensions for a much-loved son, destined to so dreadful a climate. I never doubted for a moment, his assisting me when he had the power, as he possessed a soul of honour above breaking a promise to a stranger, much more to a parent of whom he was so fond.

When



When I made an application to Sir George Metham, as I lately mentioned, for a temporary relief, to which he answered that he could not comply with my request; he at the same time informed me, that my son, by a fortunate event, had made eight thousand pounds, and certainly would not let me want: this information gave me more pleasure, from the prospect it presented of his return, than from any pecuniary views; for my apprehensions daily increased, through my not hearing from him.

About this time the female he had introduced to my knowledge, came to inform me, that she had received a letter from him, wherein he desired his duty to me, and promised to write to me very shortly: she added, that he had sent an order for her annual allowance, which she begged I would go and receive at Ross and Gray's, and, out of it, repay myself what was due to me: she then told me she would call upon me the next day, and take the overplus: and, to conclude all, she requested me to lend her a guinea.

The pleasure I enjoyed from hearing of my boy's health, joined to the seeming honest principle in the young woman, would have extracted any money my purse had contained; I therefore readily gave her what she required: as soon as she was gone, I set off for the agent's; when to my very great mortification as well as surprise, I was informed she had received her money that very morning, and she must have had it in her pocket at the time she called upon me. I found my resentment rise when I heard this; but it exceeded all bounds, upon my being informed by Mr. Price, the person who transacted Captain Metham's business, that she had received my letters from him at the time her own were delivered to her, and had secreted them.

The cruelty of such a transaction, when she must be sensible of the very great anxiety I suffered upon his account, was infinitely more unpardonable than the fraud itself. Could I have found her at that time, I should certainly have put the note I paid for her in force; and that more upon account of her barbarity, than even the imposition which had made me her dupe.

I was

I was going to break once more into complaints, at the ill usage I am continually receiving from one person or another; but I have tired myself with the subject, and I fear I have done the same by you: I shall therefore only say, I have often wondered at myself, that after the many instances I have met with of ingratitude and art, I am still liable to the same impositions; that I am so easy a prey to those who are capable of duplicity, and endeavour to excite my humanity by plausible pretexts. But I apprehend, we always judge of others by our own sensations; I am sure I always do. I so detest duplicity, that were I unhappy enough to be guilty of the worst of crimes, I would frankly acknowledge them, and not condescend by subterfuge or falsehood to disguise my guilt.

At my mother's death I had taken a female, whom she had bred up, and was particularly fond of, and sent her to France, under the protection of the Mademoiselles Gressiers, in order to learn the art of making mantuas, robes, trimmings, and all the necessary appendages to drefs. I was to pay for her board three years; by the expiration of which time it was supposed, she would be sufficiently skilled in the business to merit some salary besides her board and lodging. She had voluntarily given ten pounds a year to an indigent mother to help to support her: and the late lord Hampden allowed this little income, not only on account of the name, but because she must have possessed the estate annexed to the name, had she fortunately been of the masculine gender.

From the time of my removal to Walcot-Place, I was so turmoiled by illness, law, hope, fear, and distress, that I had neither written to her, nor heard from her: and the term I had agreed to pay for being expired before my arrival, I naturally expected that she was settled at Boulogne, as assistant to the person I had placed her with.

One day, upon my coming home, I was told, that a tall lady, in deep mourning, had called and enquired for Mrs. Bellamy; and that with such a positive certainty of her living at No. 10, Duke-street, that she would hardly be denied. As I still retained the name of West, the person who went to the door strenuously insisted, that there

was

was no one of that name who lived there ; and as it happened to be a domestic of a lodger in the house, who was totally a stranger to me, he was offended at the enquirer's obstinacy ; my maid-servant, as well as the gentlewoman of the house being out, she could get no satisfaction, and therefore left word that she would call again.

The reason I did not re-assume my own name after my benefit, was, for fear least any letters from my two sons, who always directed to me by *that* name, should miscarry ; besides this, all the trades people in the neighbourhood I dealt with, make out their bills and receipts in that name to this day ; and as those few intimates I had, knew me by no other, but for one benefit night, it occurred to me, that the person who called could be no other than Miss Hampden ; I therefore desired that I might see her when she called again.

As she had been assured of my residing here, by a person who had frequently seen me at the window, and in a dishabille, which convinced them I lodged where I did, she returned in the afternoon : I was happy to see her ; but, upon enquiring into her situation, I found she had made no proficiency in the business to which I had apprenticed her : she acquainted me, that she had very fortunately been recommended as governess to a daughter of Lady James, as she spoke French fluently, and was thought qualified for such an employment.

During her residence in this family, her mother had gone to seek a better world ; upon which occasion, her patroness, who is one of the best of women, had presented her with mourning. The time for which she engaged being expired, and Sir William thinking his daughter of age to sit always at his own table, wished to save the expence of a domestic in her line, who would now be useless ; they had accordingly discharged her, to her great regret ; her ladyship, however, had promised her the continuance of her protection, and would honour her with a recommendation, whenever she could get employment ; but this, she said, she had not much hopes of, as she only knew how to make trimmings, to sing "*Haute de Villes*," and take the promenade.

I could



I could not help smiling at this recapitulation of my charge's talents, and congratulated her upon such brilliant acquisitions, after seven years application to business. In my turn, I now informed her of my unhappy situation, which put it out of my power to assist her, agreeable to my inclination; but if she would share my morsel, I told her it was much at her service; and if she would sleep with my maid she might. The latter offer she declined, thinking, perhaps, that reposing with a more delicate girl than herself, would contaminate the blood of the Hampdens.

Lady James soon put the promises she had made her into execution; she so warmly interested herself in her favour, and was so earnest in her solicitations with Lord Hampden, that she prevailed upon his lordship to advance her a sum of money; to which her ladyship so liberally contributed, that she was provided with every thing proper to undertake a voyage to the East-Indies; thither she went, and I hear she is happily married, and settled at Madras.

As soon as I was released from my late disagreeable capture, I went to pay a visit to Mrs. A———y, who was lately come to England, and resided in the country. Her reason for visiting this kingdom was as follows: A noble peer, when upon his travels, made her some compliments, and payed great attention to her during his stay in France; which she, like other foolish women, took *tout de bon*. As that lady was now a young widow, and possessed of a large fortune by her uncle's death, she vainly imagined, that a trip to our dear little island, would be the means of adding an earl's coronet, to her own resplendent escutcheon. She accordingly came over.

But upon her arrival, she did not find that his lordship meant his *fluerets* in the same sense they were understood by the lady. Being thus disappointed of obtaining her elevated expectations, she fell from the pompous idea, and exactly verified what I have read in some celebrated French author:

“The heart of a woman is so susceptible of tenderness, that she must fall in love. The preference is generally given by them to a red coat and cockade, per-

“haps

"haps to the tinselled hero or buffoon. The serious fix their trembling hearts on the four-cornered cap or band. But if all these fail, they will prefer the *Hangman*, rather than not admire a *public* character."

After I returned from my visit, I received a letter from this lady, with one enclosed, which she requested I would send, agreeable to the directions, by the chairman I usually employed, that she might be sure it was delivered safe; but she ordered, that the bearer was by no means to wait for an answer. She had informed me, that, since her arrival, she had been at the new opera; when she observed that Mr. ——— of the Theatre Royal, Drury Lane, looked remarkably pensive; to which she added, "poor fellow! I wish I knew how to *assist him!*"

From this conversation, I had every right to believe that the letter committed to my care, was dictated solely by *humanity*. I therefore sent the man with it, who, as it happened to be Sunday, had great difficulty to find the gentleman's lodgings: two days after, an express came to town; but not finding an answer at the place where she had ordered it to be left, a little distance from town, the servant soon after brought me a letter, which seemed to be dictated by a Bedlamite. In consequence of this pretty manœuvre, the lady and I had a breach: she returned to France; and, as I hear, has thrown a large fortune and all her beauty into a cloister, where she purposes to end her days.

I forgot to mention, that during the short time I was at the officer's house in Cary-street, I met there a person whose face I thought I had seen before; and as she showed me some civility, I supposed, by the ease which appeared in her countenance, that she belonged to the house, her dress being rather frippery genteel.

Whilst the bail bond was filling up, she informed me that her name was Douglas; that she was of a good family, but from some indiscretions, had involved herself in a debt of thirty pounds, which occasioned her confinement, and which she had in vain endeavoured to raise. You know *humanity* is so predominant a propensity in my mind, that it may even be termed a foible; you will not wonder, therefore, that I felt an inclination to assist her:

her : but going out of town for a few days upon a visit to Mrs. A——y, as I have just mentioned, it was totally out of my power to pay any attention to her.

Upon my return I found a letter from her. I sent an answer to it, and therein advised her to write to a noble duke, who is possessed of humanity in the highest degree. She did so, but received no answer. She was soon after liberated by what was then termed a fire ticket, which was sent by an unknown hand : as soon as she found herself restored to freedom, she came to me ; and as I always suppose persons to be what they seem, and there appeared to be so much candour in her manner of telling her story, I took her to be with me, and the strongest intimacy was formed between us.

Methinks I hear you say, inspired by a presentiment, from a few words I have let drop, of what is likely to be the consequence of this hasty attachment, " Will nothing make you wise ?"—" Will not the many instances of ingratitude and duplicity you have already experienced, guard you against a repetition of them ?"—" How many more instances have you to tell me of ? for you lately said the number was not complete."—Have a little patience ; and as I now draw a conclusion of my long sad story, the latter part of your questions will soon be answered. With regard to your first quere, " Will nothing make you wise ?" I can only say, I fear not, if the wisdom you mean is to be purchased with the annihilation of that humane susceptibility which has ever been my pride and my delight.

G. A. B.

## LETTER XCIX.

March 1, 17—.

**I**N some short time, there appeared a paragraph in the public papers, which mentioned that the names of all those who had surrendered themselves, or had been set down in the books of the King's-Bench, would be published in a pamphlet : alarmed at having my name enrolled with many, who had caused theirs to be set down, and provided themselves with fire-tickets, for fraudulent purposes,



poses, I wrote a letter to Mr. Woodfall, to prevent it if possible. I therein acquainted him with the real fact; I fully explained the circumstances of the arrest, and requested that my name might not be inserted, as the next term would conclude the affair, an affair which had been productive of so much vexation to me; but to my very great mortification, when the black list came out, I found Mrs. D——'s and myself not in the most pleasing company.

The people of the house where I reside, had till now, entertained no suspicion of what had happened; but when they saw my name published they were not a little alarmed. They apprehended that I should avail myself of being in the situation of a prisoner, which every person in the list pretended they had a right to: I, however, soon convinced them of their error; by giving them demonstrative proofs that I was incapable of such baseness.

I never in my life felt myself in so humiliating a situation, as at the bare supposition of being so base as to take means of such a nature to release myself from just debts. Let the poor unfortunate man or woman, who by losses in trade, or by similar misfortunes, are reduced to a state of insolvency, take advantage of these opportunities to regain their liberty, and to be restored to their families and avocations; but all others, in my opinion, ought to be precluded from the advantages. The difficulty, indeed, lies in drawing the line.

Had the people where I lodged been perfectly acquainted with my character and principles, they would have known that I possessed a mind superior to every dishonest purpose: as I had not exonerated myself from my debts when I was so greatly involved, as I have given an account of, I could hardly think of such a measure, when I owed comparatively little to what I did then, and had been so greatly indulged by my honest creditors.

I had wrote to my son Metham, to inform him of the ingratitude of the woman he had recommended to my notice, and of her having secreted his letters; but, to my very great surprise, had received no answer by the packet, though, in course, I might have one by it. I was perfectly satisfied of his rectitude, duty, and affection;  
and

and was convinced, that such treatment would have claimed his attention, had all been well; I therefore was extremely apprehensive for his health: my fears made me imagine the worst; and, as they had done in many other cases, they now proved prophetic.

Upon being disappointed of hearing by the packet, I wrote to Sir George, to enquire if he had received any intelligence; and by the return of the post had an answer: Observing that the seal was black, it was some time before I had courage to break it open; but when I had done so, and read, "now summon all your fortitude," it became unnecessary to see the rest of the contents. The letter instantly dropped out of my hand, and I fell senseless on the floor.

When I recovered, I found the mistress of the house, and some others whom she had called to my assistance, drowned in tears: but tears refused me their aid; and through the want of the relief they usually afford in extreme grief, I was nearly choaked by the violence of mine. My feelings were really inexpressible; I could admit of no comfort. This of all my afflictions was the severest; and it was rendered more pungent, by the hopes I had encouraged of soon having the happiness to see him; and in him, all that a fond mother could wish or expect.

Thus did I lose a kind son, an indulgent friend, and an invaluable protector, and was left destitute of comfort or support.—What a succession of troubles, as you have seen, have been my portion! With truth does the \* king exclaim in Hamlet, "When sorrows come, they come not single spies, but in battalions."—My other son was in the East-Indies, and my fears, heightened by the consideration just quoted, raised suggestions in my mind, that I might be at that moment *childless*; for as to my daughter, I did not, nor could I, after her behaviour since my distresses have come upon me, look upon her in the light of a child; as she had shewn herself to be unnatural, and the true daughter of a Calcraft: I can say, with

\* Hamlet, Act IV. Scene V.

Lear,

\* Lear, "She has tied sharp-tooth'd unkindness, like a vulture, to my heart."

My intimate companion wrote to Sir George Metham, to inform him of my deplorable situation, and, at the same time, to let him know that I had not ability to pay the last respect to my much lamented son. Sir George did not condescend to answer her letter: I should have wrote myself, but was unable, a fever having been the consequence of the agitation of my spirits; and when the violence abated, it became an intermittent.

As soon as I could hold a pen, I wrote to him myself, requesting that he would enable me to go into mourning; when, to my great mortification, he returned for answer, that it was not in his power, as his own expences called for all he had saved from the ruin of his fortune. This denial was the more unkind, and gave me a greater degree of pain than it otherwise would have done, as the motive of my request ought to have been felt as much by a father as a mother, for a son, of whom he had reason to be proud; instead of dissipating his fortune and time upon dissolute characters, who make him, by all accounts, the subject of indecent mirth. Old age and levity, will always be the contempt of the thinking part of the world, and the object of laughter to those who profit by their folly.

I did not know what to do, or how to procure the necessaries that decency and affection rendered so needful; in this dilemma, I applied once more to Mr. Stacie, who kindly lent me sufficient for my equipment; and advanced me besides, some money upon two portraits, which I had just received from Mr. Woodward's executors. These portraits Mr. Willet, the attorney, had assured Mr. Bromfield, that I *had* received *four years* before I *did* receive them. You may judge from this circumstance, that my complaints against him are not totally without foundation; on the contrary, it will serve as a corroboration, were any necessary, though in itself of comparatively trifling importance, that I do not complain without reason.

\* King Lear, Act II. Scene XI.

I was



I was advised to petition the lords of the treasury, for leave to administer to my late son. Upon application to Lord Palmerston, his lordship condescended to write to me. He advised me not to think of such a step, unless I was sure there were effects sufficient to answer the great trouble and expence which would attend it. As I had received information that Captain Metham had disposed of his commission, and the purchase money was deposited in the hands of his agents Grey and Ogilvie; and that he had proposed coming to England in order to purchase into the guards; I could not help thinking, with those who advised me to administer, that there certainly were effects in Jamaica. And in this opinion I was confirmed by the intelligence I had some time before received from Sir George Metham, of his son's having fortunately acquired eight thousand pounds, as already mentioned.

As I was convinced that he had nothing to induce him to make a will, till that eventual stroke of fortune had taken place, I was the more inclinable to administer as his mother: and this not only for the emoluments I might receive, but from the desire to pay all the debts he had contracted here, exonerate his memory, and, at the same time, clear myself from the heavy obligation I had entered into with him.

Instigated by these motives, I persevered in my design, and after some months application, got Mr. Goodflesh, a principal creditor, to interest himself in it. That gentleman prevailed upon Mr. Bucle, his attorney, to enter into an engagement for me at the commons, that I should pay as far as the assets would admit, first repaying myself the expences which had been incurred. After much trouble, letters of administration were granted; when to my infinite surprise, I was informed by Mr. Barry, General Dalling's secretary, that there was a will, and of which he would send me a copy.

This had put it out of my power to act under my letters of administration, and consequently prevented me from taking any steps towards paying his debts. Besides which, it has involved me more than ever. The agents have refused to give me any account; and notwithstanding I have, for these three years, repeatedly wrote to several

veral persons at Jamaica, I have never been able to get any account whatsoever of the real state of his circumstances. And I am still at a loss, from the many different reports, to guess whether he died in circumstances or insolvent.

Thus continually disappointed in all my expectations, the sport of fortune, and the slave of misfortune, I knew not which way to turn myself. However, to my no small satisfaction, his excellency Comte Haslang, about this time recovered from his late indisposition, and promised to renew the little income he had allowed me. The affliction I had undergone, had greatly impaired my health, but my spirits more. Whatever assistance I from time to time received, was devoted before it came into my hands. I once more applied to the proprietors of Covent-Garden Theatre for tickets, which Mr. Harris kindly granted me. But from a mistake in the night, and an alteration in his play, his kindness had not the desired effect. I received, instead, twenty guineas from Mrs. Armistead for a box, and what adds to the obligation is, that I have not the pleasure of knowing her personally, though I have reason to be well acquainted with her liberal heart. At this period Comte Haslang had a relapse, which gave me great uneasiness.

Every thing now seemed to tend to augment my distresses and unhappiness.—No sooner did a new hope of extrication from my difficulties spring up, than it evaporated, and shewed that it had only been an empty bubble.—Every friendly twig that presented itself, and seemed to promise relief, broke on the first pressure, and I found myself rapidly hurried away by the tide of misfortune.—These observations recall to my memory a saying of my dear mother's, which I will give you, and with it conclude my letter. She used to tell me, when I was in very different circumstances from what I am at present, that *Fortune* had knocked so often at my door, and so often been denied admittance, that she much feared the *fickle Dame* would send an ugly relation of her's to call upon me, a *Miss* of her name; who, when she came, would be so bold an intruder, that she would not take a denial. I have wofully experienced her assertion. *Mis*-fortune has,

Vol. II. M indeed,

indeed, called upon me, nor could I shut the door against her.—She has not only been a visitor, but is become an inmate with me.—And I have been obliged, sorely against my inclination, to keep this maiden lady company.

G. A. B.

## LETTER C.

March 9, 17—

**T**HE failure of what was promised me as a support till my affairs were settled, and which I depended upon, but which was again put a stop to by Comte Haslang's relapse, still left me involved. I immediately lessened my expence, and removed to a cheap lodging, which I had formerly occupied, till I could afford a better situation.

In order to exonerate myself from debt, I accepted of a proposal made me by Mr. Woodward's brother, of disposing of the money in the three per cent consols, the interest of which he was to receive for his life. What made his proposal seem the more eligible, was, that Mr. Willet had repeatedly assured us, that if we filed an amicable bill for this purpose, he would by no means oppose it.

We accordingly brought the request before the barons of the Exchequer, and as we concluded there would be no opposition from the executor's attorney, we did not retain counsel to shew cause, and set forth the reasons of our petition. But, to the perfect amazement of the solicitor employed by Mr. Woodward and myself, Mr. Willet used every argument in his power to prevent the bill from passing. He assured the court, that the petition was contrary to the letter and intent of the will, which was meant to tie me up, so as to prevent me from parting with the least tittle of what was bequeathed me, as the testator wished to guard against my extravagance, of which he had the greatest apprehensions. Upon this the bill was dismissed.

What could occasion such an alteration in Mr. Willet's sentiments, and excite him to such a wanton piece of cruelty, I am at a loss to determine: unless it was the fear



fear of being obliged to come to a *regular account*, which it seems our solicitor had at the same time prayed for, and he must have submitted to, had our petition been granted; or else that he might have the pleasure of expending a little more of the money which was bequeathed me, upon another law-suit, to his own emolument. But this was of a piece with the rest of his conduct; and will, I trust, meet, ere long, with the censure it deserves. The consequences of this unexpected disappointment were, that I became more deeply involved, and was obliged in my turn to disappoint several I was indebted to. For so certain was I of meeting with no obstruction to the suit, that I had promised to pay several sums I had been necessitated to obtain credit for.

From these accumulated circumstances, my distress was become so urgent, that notwithstanding the resolutions I had made, not to trouble his excellency any more, I found myself obliged to apply again to Comte Haslang. The indelicacy of the measure, I acknowledge, hurt me much; as I had every reason to suppose, the generosity of his excellency would have prevented any solicitation, had it been convenient; for nature had blest him with the most liberal sentiments, such, indeed, as often involved him in very great difficulties. And as I had no reason to doubt his friendship, after such repeated instances of it as he had shown me, cruel necessity could alone have forced me to obtrude my distress again upon him.

Friendship with women, is said to be sister to love. You might, therefore, or at least the world might, be induced to suppose it was that kind of *friendship*, which is so nearly a-kin to love, that subsisted between the Comte and myself. But it is my boast, and upon reflection, a source of happiness to me, amidst the censures that have been passed upon my conduct, that I have been blest with the *disinterested* friendship of some of the most conspicuous and shining characters which have appeared in the senate, the cabinet, the drawing-room, and the green-room.

And this enviable distinction, I can only impute to my invariable sincerity and philanthropy; together with my never assuming any superiority of understanding, or vanity, that too many females are apt to indulge, when they hap-

pen to have tolerable talents joined to reading; and more particularly so, if they are gifted with retention.—By not laying claim to praise, every little folly of mine had ten times the effect it would have had, if I had set myself up either as a wit, or a woman of literature and understanding.

Pardon the seeming egotism of this declaration; it does not, I assure you, proceed from vanity, but from a desire to convey to my fair country-women my ideas on this subject.—They may be assured, that a modest diffidence will give a lustre to their accomplishments, which the most ostentatious display of them cannot do.—The less pretensions our sex make to a superiority of talents and understanding, so much the greater will be the respect and admiration bestowed upon them, by those who have the *undoubted superiority*.

The next day, being Sunday, I went to Golden-Square, and had the infinite pleasure to see the Comte so far recovered, as to be able to attend divine service in the chapel, where he had not been for some months. After his Excellency returned from chapel, I had the happiness of hearing from him, that his health was wholly re-established, and that he had not been so well for the last thirty years. He then told me, that he proposed doing me the honour of a visit very soon, and desired I would send my servant, the Thursday following, for an answer to the application I had made to him. To which he was pleased to add, that it gave him very great concern to have suffered me to remind him of his promise. I was most sincerely happy at the Comte's recovery, as I was not only attached to him by obligations, and a series of many years professed friendship, but had a very great personal respect and regard for him. And I felt an additional satisfaction upon this occasion, when I considered, that I should be at once able to pay the demands I was pressed for, and have besides some little income to support me, till such time as my affairs were settled; when I should no longer be obliged to intrude upon the generosity of a friend, who had given me such repeated proofs of his munificence.

According

According to his Excellency's appointment, my little faithful maid, exactly at twelve, tripped away to Golden-Square, with a certainty of my wishes being gratified: and with the pleasing hope of seeing her old patron, who had always been particularly partial to her. And I myself was so very sure of receiving the relief I expected, that I insisted upon a female intimate, who was just come to town, staying dinner.—But how could I think of expectations being fulfilled in this world of uncertainty!—I who had so often experienced disappointments!

When my messenger returned, I eagerly held out my hand to receive the answer I doubted not but she had brought. When instead of delivering me the wished-for bounty, she exclaimed, "there is no answer; you have now lost your only friend; the Comte is dead." Thunderstruck at such an unexpected piece of intelligence, I could not credit what I heard. I therefore immediately ran with all speed to his house, where, to my inexpressible grief, I found the information too true. The destroying angel had administered the three fatal drops the day before\*.

As there was something very singular in this nobleman's death, which happened suddenly and unexpectedly, after his almost miraculous recovery, I think you will not be displeased with the recital. After I had taken my leave of the Comte on the Sunday, he ordered his chariot that he might pay a few visits, in part of the numberless ones he was, through his long indisposition, indebted. It being a very bleak day, some of the domestics requested his Excellency to postpone his intention till the weather was milder; but he persisted in his design, alledging, that it would

\* The ancient as well as some modern Jews maintain, that the exterminating Angel, as soon as the Lord has given commission for the death of any person, hovers over the head of the destined mortal with a sword in his hand, at the point of which hangs three drops of gall. The object beholding this terrifying preparation, being suddenly dismayed, opens his mouth; when the Angel of Death administers the fatal unction, which has the following effects: the first drop deprives him of life; the second occasions a livid paleness; and the third reduces the Cadavre to dust in the grave. Calmut Dissert. sur le Defaite de l'Armee de Sannach.



be scarcely possible for him to return all his ceremonious visits of thanks before the birth-day.

He accordingly set off. But in his tour, one of the horses falling, he was obliged to let down the glasses of his carriage till the creature could be got up. To do this took some considerable time; during which, the easterly wind blew directly in his Lordship's face; a circumstance, which was sure to be attended with fatal consequences to a person who had not been out of his room for many months, and was just recovered from a complaint, so inveterate and dangerous, as to make his restoration almost a miracle.

At night he complained of cold. The next day he was seemingly better. But the following, the death warrant was announced; and I am incredibly informed, that instead of his being permitted to breathe out his last respirations in peace, he was teized into signing a will to the prejudice of his son, the present Comte, who is an honour to his country, and of whom I have often heard his father speak in the most affectionate terms; declaring that he was the best of children, and that he esteemed himself much obliged to him. What the Comte left behind him, could be no object of concern to him, but, as a mark of parental affection, it certainly would have been pleasing to so good a mind as he is blest with.

The young Baron, the Comte's executor and heir, suffered himself to be totally guided by the persons about him; as by all accounts he is polite and of a good disposition. These endowments, indeed, generally render the possessors more liable to the impositions of designing persons: in consequence of this, many indecencies were shown to the poor remains of this venerable member of the *corps diplomatique*, as well as to his chaplains and his old domestics. The first were gentlemen of exemplary piety, sound learning, and of orthodox principles: but the chaplain who was introduced over their heads, behaved towards them with such unmanly arrogance, as would have been illiberal in the highest degree, if shown even to insolent lackeys.

This behaviour soon obliged them to quit the chapel; and would have been the means of its being totally deserted,

serted, had it not been for the timely arrival of that justly celebrated Irish luminary, Father O'Leary; whose patriotic sentiments, united to his unaffected piety, have done almost as much good, as the ignorance and blunders of many of his countrymen have been productive of mischief. I would here again remark, as I think I have done once before upon a similar occasion, that I would not wish to throw a general odium upon the Catholic clergy of Ireland by these strictures: I make no doubt but there are many as good, though few as conspicuous as the gentleman I have just mentioned. And I must repeat, that it is with great pleasure I recollect, that I formerly had the happiness of knowing Mr. Richardson, and Mr. Archer, who were likewise patterns of piety and learning, and were an honour to the tenets they professed.

As to the remains of my much respected friend, instead of having the honours paid him which were due to his dignity and high rank, he was deposited in the common burial-ground of St. Pancras; and for many months without even a stone, or any memorial to point out where he lay. This degrading treatment affected me the more, as his Excellency had shown much dissatisfaction at his old housekeeper's being buried in that place. He expressed himself with some asperity upon the occasion, saying, "I would pay more respect to the remains of a dog that I valued." And it was not without great difficulty he could be brought to consent to her interment there, even when he was informed it was by her own express desire. Poor man! what would he have suffered, could he but have known that his own earthly remains would be deposited in a place to which he had so great a dislike? It is true, that \* "the mean and mighty, rotting together, have one dust; yet Reverence, the Angel of the world, doth make distinction of place 'twixt high and low."

All his dignities and honours could not secure him from repeated insults. For in addition to the foregoing, a chaplain, whom he had dismissed, and who had publicly

\* Cymbeline, Act IV. Scene IV.

affronted him, including *his whole family*, was immediately sent for, to fill up one of the vacancies.

I have dwelt much longer upon this subject, than otherwise I should have done, as the event has occasioned great surprise and much enquiry: and though the respect I bear the memory of so worthy a man, and so good a friend, might be supposed to make me partial, I can truly affirm, that I have recited the circumstances of his disrespectful treatment, and unseemly exit from the stage of life, after he had trod it so long, and in so irreproachable a manner, without the least exaggeration. Indeed, I have mentioned it with far more lenity than the subject deserves.

The accumulated misfortunes, by which I was now overwhelmed, made me almost despair of ever conquering them. But upon my going to hear the Comte's funeral service, it was so perfectly and awfully performed by two of his *Lordship's own Chaplains*, that, struck with reverence and submission, I found myself enabled by divine Providence, to bear whatever might happen, with fortitude and resignation.

So totally was I immersed in those thoughts which the solemn scene excited, that I did not observe that the pew of the deceased was filled with ladies; an indelicacy that was remarked even by the strangers, whom curiosity had led to see the ceremony. It certainly would have greatly added to the solemnity, had his seat been left vacant; as the regret of the audience would have received no little augmentation, from turning towards it the brimful eye, and missing the noble owner, who so lately as the Sunday before had graced it.

My sorrow at the recollection of the loss of this good friend is still so lively, that had I not reached the usual length of my letters, I should here be obliged to lay down my pen and conclude this.

G. A. B.

LETTER



## LETTER CI.

March 13, 17—

**I**N the distressful embarrassment to which I was now reduced, I advertised for a place as house-keeper, or attendant upon an elderly lady or gentleman. As I had been accustomed to a sick room, was naturally tender to those who are indisposed, and had acquired much experience from the illnesses of several of my friends, as related, I flattered myself I should not fail to please whoever should honour me with the acceptance of my offered service.

As I still retained the name of West, I imagined that my having been formerly upon the stage, as well as the character for extravagance which had been imputed to me, would not prove an impediment to my scheme: and if it should afterwards be found out, I trusted, that my utility, and unremitting attention in my new employment, would endear me so much, that it would rather be a circumstance in my favour than disfavour. So sanguine was I of meeting with success in this application, that all my thoughts were employed in forming an under-plot to my piece; which was to introduce my partner in misfortune (to whom I was now considerably indebted) into a similar situation. But to our very great mortification, though I frequently repeated the advertisement, to the visible decrease of my nearly exhausted finances, I found I had nothing to hope from my new adopted scheme. Not a soul ever enquired after the advertiser, notwithstanding she could have rendered herself so serviceable.

So much do the news-papers now abound with offered services of this kind, that I believe the greatest part of them meet with the same fate mine did. They, indeed, answer more than one good purpose; for in the first place they tend to the increase of his Majesty's revenue, and in the next, to the emoluments of the proprietors of the papers: though this affords very little consolation to the poor wretches, who embark their last shilling upon the uncertain adventure.

About this time, I renewed an intimacy which had formerly subsisted between Mrs. Greville and myself; a lady whom my mother had known, and been partial to from a child. This lady had been rendered unfortunate by her union with a man that treated her with the greatest barbarity: she had endeavoured, by the most unremitting industry, to manage a trifling income left by her sister Lady Diemar. For, notwithstanding her theatrical talents are universally allowed, from some strange circumstances she has been unemployed for several seasons. It is a mystery I could never unravel, why this lady should be thrown by, while others, with not half her merit, have engagements. The goodness of her heart prevailed over her scanty circumstances, and she cheerfully offered me the little assistance she could spare. But as it must be supposed from what I have said, that it could only be a temporary relief, and given at different times, it could not extricate me from my difficulties.

I wrote to India to my son and nephew, but no answers could be expected from them for two or three years; and how to subsist was the labour of my thoughts. My maid was my greatest unhappiness; for as to myself, I had now acquired a perfect indifference to whatever might befall me; and my mind was more calm than it had ever been since my early days. This serenity was a blessing which I had not experienced, during the many years I had passed in folly and dissipation.

At the conclusion of the season, a gentleman, who possesses the most extensive philanthropy, and to whom I owe repeated obligations, opened a subscription for me at Brookes's; but the summer being too much advanced, and most of the members gone into the country, it did not succeed equal to his kind intentions. The money arising from it, was barely sufficient to pay a demand which a severe creditor had sued me for; and what added to the cruelty, was his knowing that the debt was not of my contracting.

The subscription, however, was productive of a more fortunate circumstance than the sum received, as it assured a person, who belongs to the club, of my distress, which he had only slightly heard of from a female friend of mine:

mine: and I cannot sufficiently express my gratitude for his repeated assistance. It is with the utmost difficulty I can so far suppress my grateful sensations, as to keep them from breaking out into public acknowledgements for so singular an instance of benevolence; but I obey the injunction, though with reluctance. The consciousness of possessing a mind so enlarged, and the pleasures which flow from acts of beneficence will be his reward; and I shall never forget, that he is a shining pattern of the most unlimited and exalted humanity.

About this time my patron went abroad; but before he left England, he offered me his farther assistance. I, however, declined the offer, feeling myself already too much obliged; and having some reason to fear his generosity would overleap the bounds of prudence.

And I, in order to keep pace with his sentiments, at this juncture, fell into a very great inconvenience, through the high opinion I entertained of an artful woman, and the confidence I placed in her. So great was my folly upon the occasion, that I blush at the recollection of it, and am even ashamed to mention it; and this at a time, when experience ought to have taught me to be careful: and after the miseries I had suffered through the duplicity of others, to be upon my guard against the false pretensions of those who descend to art.

Upon my returning home one day from a friend, whom I had been to inform of my situation; and as I was indulging my reflections on my folly; on the years I had lived, and on what I ought to have attained, a knowledge of the world; I was informed that a young gentleman, whose name was Nash, had called, and was very desirous to see me: as I was not at home, he left a note from counsellor Murphy of Lincoln's Inn, the purport of which was, that the executors of Mr. Davy, to whom I had disposed of my annuity, had got a report in our favour against the executors of Mr. Calcraft; and if I had not disposed of the surplus of it, he would undertake to get that, and the arrears also for me.

As I had long since given up all thoughts of such an event, the deeds not being in my possession, I could not fail



fail of being much pleased with the account: the only voucher I had to show, was the counterpart which Mr. Calcraft had sent to Ireland as before related. I had, indeed, requested Mr. Townly Ward, of Henrietta-street, to meet the attorney who acted for Mr. Davy's executors, to consult what could be done in the affair; but I imagine, that through hurry of business my request slipped his memory. I had applied to this gentleman, as he might be supposed to know more of Mr. Calcraft's circumstances than any other person, from having been Mrs. Calcraft's solicitor, and had gained her cause. And, exclusive of these motives, I was induced to make application to him, from the great opinion I had of his abilities and rectitude in his profession, added to pecuniary favours. But hearing nothing from Mr. Ward, I looked upon the affair as totally lost: the surprise and pleasure which the intelligence gave me, was consequently the greater.

I immediately waited on Mr. Murphy; and so apprehensive was I of its being one of my usual flattering *nothings*, that I half doubted my senses. That gentleman desired I would go to Mr. Price, at Salter's-Hall, who would acquaint me with the whole process. I directly set off, and found Mr. Nash, the chief clerk, who informed me that it was necessary to make an affidavit.

This was rendered needful, by our opponents having produced receipts of mine which I could not have given: for Mr. Calcraft never would receive any receipts upon account of the annuity, it having been in a state of litigation from the first hour it was claimed. He always alleged, that it was meant as a provision for myself and the child I was then pregnant with, at the time it was settled upon me. During the whole period I resided in Mr. Calcraft's house, so far was I from making any demand of the annuity, that I never read the deed, nor heard it read, till I borrowed the money upon it: and upon this occasion I was greatly surprised to find, that the penalty of the bond, instead of being *thirty* thousand pounds, as I believed it to be, was only for *three* thousand. But at the time this discovery was made, I had discovered also, that a contract of much greater importance

ance to me was invalid ; and despised the giver of both too much, even to reproach him. Had such receipts been actually given, he would certainly have produced them to young Mr. Stubbs, his then attorney, as well as the general release now in his possession, which was given as a receipt to stop the process commenced for the remainder of my diamonds.

But notwithstanding the master's report, no money has been paid ; and I have lately been informed that nothing can be received, till the whole of Mr. Calcraft's affairs are settled. This the executors do not, as I have already said, seem in haste to do ; and the affair might not be concluded, till long after I am a prey for worms. Nor have I any hopes from the claims of gratitude, however well founded mine might be. But if the Lucas family would please to recollect, they must know, that but for my mediation, Mr. Calcraft would not easily have been reconciled to his sister after her marriage.

Not that I would be thought to insinuate, that Mr. Lucas was not more than equal to an alliance with this great man ; who was so exceeding generous, as to allow Miss Calcraft the sum of fifty pounds a year for her maintenance ; a very scanty pittance indeed, to make the appearance of a gentlewoman. They will further please to remember, that after the reconciliation which I then brought about, Mr. Calcraft got his brother-in-law a lucrative place in the revenue ; and likewise at his death, left great part of his estate to his sister and her heirs ; upon condition, as I am informed, they take upon them the respectable name of Calcraft.

I had undoubtedly every claim to respect from the Lucas family, as I was more than a sister to Miss Calcraft, as well as to the general. The latter indeed, always treated me as such : but where good-will is wanting, humanity sleeps. And Mr. Lucas may, as well as others, have been impressed with ideas to my disadvantage. At the same time I flatter myself, when he is acquainted with the *real facts*, he will be led to *pity* rather than *blame* me ; and in consequence, be induced to expedite the payment of what I am a claimant for. When he has read the foregoing letters, I flatter myself he will consider  
that

that as but a small return, for my not only giving up a much more valuable consideration, but for my being also made miserable, by being a deceived slave for years to one, for whom, notwithstanding I once professed an esteem, I never *did* or could love.

I thought myself happy, in the prospect of the before-mentioned trifling addition to a small pension Mr. Jenkinson had granted me, upon my application, in consequence of the death of my son. I soon after had a remittance from abroad, which enabled me to repay the greatest part of what my worthy preserver had assisted me with : this I was the more anxious to do, for many reasons ; but the strongest was, from being informed that he had occasion for the money. Being about this time likewise pressed for part of a debt, which I had entered into an engagement to pay, upon account of my ever regretted son, I parted with every guinea I was possessed of, and left myself, once more, penniless.

As I had every reason to pique myself upon the partiality her Grace of Bolton had for me, and relying upon that goodness and humanity which mark all her actions, I took the liberty to acquaint her Grace with my distress ; and by the return of the post, I received a letter, with a draft inclosed, upon her banker. Though my indigence was greater than can be expressed, yet believe me when I affirm, that I was made more happy by the receipt of her Grace's elegant epistle, than I was by the necessary gift which accompanied them.

There is a manner in conferring an obligation (as I have already observed) which doubly enhances the value of it. As a proof of this, I shall beg leave to transcribe, for your perusal, a letter I received some time since, from the most worthy of benefactors.

“ M A D A M,

“ I am much concerned to hear you still labour under any difficulties. If it did not sound cruel, I should almost be tempted to say, I was happy in the opportunity of being of service to you.

“ I have



“ I have enclosed a draft for one hundred pounds,  
 “ which I beg your acceptance of, and that you will never think of returning the same. I hope it will in  
 “ some measure relieve your mind, which will more  
 “ than repay me. If, upon any future occasion, I can be  
 “ of service, I beg you will command me, in the assurance, that I cannot feel a greater pleasure, than in  
 “ giving ease to a heart like your's. And am, with the  
 “ greatest esteem,

“ Your obedient humble servant,

“ ————— ”

Had a youthful beauty received such a flattering epistle, vanity would, most probably, have misconstrued it into a billetdoux; but few such, I fear, are written to a person of a certain age. Indeed, I fear there are few such men; and, for the honour of the age, I wish I was permitted to insert the name; but I am commanded and must obey. How exactly does the following \* passage, in which Shakespeare has so truly described the pleasures of beneficence, seem to correspond with the sentiments contained in the foregoing letter.

“ Oh you gods! (think I) what need we have any  
 “ friends, if we should never have need of them? they  
 “ would most resemble sweet instruments hung up in  
 “ cases, that keep their sounds to themselves. Why, I  
 “ have often wished myself poorer, that I might come  
 “ nearer to you; we were born to do benefits. And  
 “ what better or properer can we call our own, than the  
 “ riches of our friends? O! what a precious comfort  
 “ 'tis to have so many, like brothers, commanding one  
 “ another's fortunes?”—Real disinterested friendship, is the *rara avis* of this age; and to me, the writer of the foregoing letter appears to be that phoenix. There may be, however, I make no doubt, many of the same generous disposition; but as I have outlived all my other friends, and have had more than came to my share, or

\* Timon of Athens, Act I. Scene V.

than I merited, I ought to be thankful that I retain the good wishes of *one*.

Having given you the letter of a sensible and liberal friend, I cannot resist the temptation of sending you, by way of contrast, the beginning of one, containing the declaration of love, which I received from a noble lord, upon my return from Ireland: and this I shall do *verbatim*, to add to the singularity of it.

“ My dear Angle,

“ I have not capacity to tell you how much I love you.”

This short specimen, I think, will suffice to let you into the merits of this elegant epistle, it is taken from; the whole of which, and it was a long one, was written in the same learned style, and spelt agreeable to the rules of the same kind of orthography. As I can say with Millamont, “ that an illiterate man is my aversion,” had I been inclined to gallantry, his lordship’s curious letter would have barred his success.

How comes it that ignorance is more conspicuous in a man than in a woman? As drinking and swearing, though dreadful vices in themselves, appear more horrid in the latter than the former. This observation tempts me to proceed a little farther on the same topic. When once a woman divests herself of that delicacy and softness which is one of the most distinguished adornments of the female character, she debases herself into a brute; and having thus lost all claim to the name of a human being, she is looked upon with horror and contempt, by even the most dissolute of the other sex.

I have often thought, that the legislature ought to interfere upon this occasion, and enact some law to exclude such unhappy wretches from society. For as precept is less powerful than example, youth and ignorance are often deluded by them; as in general, they wish to make others as abandoned as themselves: not that I wish my loved country women to be tied down to the severe rules

of

of the Lacedæmonian ladies, I would only recommend them to join the fortitude, patience, and courage of a Roman matron, to the beauty, good sense, brilliancy of wit, and delicacy of an English woman.

Methinks I hear you here exclaim, "You are a very proper person, indeed, to set up for a dictatress over the conduct of your country women; you who have so erred yourself!"—I acknowledge there is some room for your making this remark—appearances I own are against me.—But when it is considered, that my errors have proceeded rather from imprudence than a bad disposition; that I have severely suffered for them; and that I entertain no assuming ideas of my own understanding; I hope my having intermixed with my story, when they occurred, such sentiments as seem probable to prove beneficial to those into whose hands they might fall, will not be objected to.

G. A. B.

## LETTER CII.

March 23, 17—

A Little after Christmas, as a gentlewoman with whom I was very intimate, was condoling with me upon the many untoward events of my life, and the almost incredible disappointments I had met with, my maid came up, almost breathless with joy, for money to pay for a letter, which the postman said came from India. Concluding it was from my son, as he used always to direct for me by the name of West, and not having a doubt but it was for *me*, in the agitation of spirits I was thrown into by the unexpected occurrence, I tore it open, where it was already almost open at the back; when, instead of the letter I was in hopes of receiving, I found two bills of exchange; one drawn upon a gentleman in Marlborough-street for fifty pounds, which was the *second*; and the other upon a gentleman in Ireland for thirty, with a letter of advice written to him; but no other letter.

I sent



I sent immediately to enquire if any other Mrs. West lived in the neighbourhood, but could not learn that there was. I then recollected that Mrs. Charles Smith, of Wimpole-street, had called at my lodgings a year and a half before, and had left a card; as I had not the honour of knowing that lady, I judged she might have intended the visit for another Mrs. West, and consequently might be able to give me some intelligence relative to the affair. I accordingly wrote to inform her of my having received a packet; but as it contained no letter by which it could be known from whom it came, it might be intended for another. To this note I received no answer. I wrote again; when the chairman brought a verbal message which I could not understand. It was either that the lady was abroad, or in the country.

Not being able to gain any intelligence, after waiting some time, I carried the bill of fifty pounds for acceptance, it being at thirty days sight. When I presented it, the gentleman enquired where the first bill was; to which I answered, that I had not received it. We therefore conjectured it to be lost. At the time the bill became due, the friend with whom I had left it, sent me word that there was another claimant, who had produced the *third* bill of exchange, and proved to be the husband of the Mrs. West, in whose favour the bills were drawn. I therefore delivered him the other bill and the letter; and thus vanished this pleasing expectation, as so many others had done before.

About this time Mrs. Douglas came, *as she said*, from Scotland. I met her with that open cordiality, which I hope will mark every action of my life, and shared with pleasure my little with her. But like others, when her situation altered, she wished to withdraw herself. For this purpose, she contrived to excite a disagreement between us. She commenced her rancour, by loading with abuse one of the first characters in the kingdom; whom she knew I loved when a child, and admire as a man.

A delicacy with regard to her situation, induced me to let that pass unnoticed: when this method failed, en-  
raged

raged at my hinting that she claimed relationship with a gentleman, to whom she had no nearer affinity than as sister to one of Adam's sons, her rage grew ungovernable. She scolded like one of those good women that take their seats at Billingsgate; and in their language, bestowed upon me every epithet that rancour, malice, absurdity, or poor weak woman could invent. This had, however, no other effect, than making me smile, which increased her rage even to madness. But I still made no return: for it has been an invariable rule with me, when I meet with ingratitude, duplicity, or intentional insult *from a person I regarded*, to let them down in the Book of Memory, as departed this life: a mode which prevents those acrimonious feelings that result from too much sensibility. I consequently now esteem this lady as safely laid in the ground, and buried with her fathers, nor any longer an inhabitant of the terrestrial world. Forgive an impromptu upon this occasion—Avaunt, *Duplicity*, detested child of art, begot by Deceit, and nurtured by Hypocrisy! Dare not intrude thyself into the generous bosom, lest every vice, thy sure attendants, follow.—But come, oh come, *thou faithful inmate of my breast*, Sincerity, daughter of heaven! And with thee bring white handed Hope, and the sweet cherub, Peace. *Possess me all*, till the cold arms of death embrace me, and this vain world deludes no more.

I have now, madam, gone through every incident of my life. A life that has been, as the relation of them must have convinced you, perpetually subject to vicissitude, disappointment, trouble and anxiety. And I think I have recollected every circumstance that will tend, either to furnish you and the public with amusement; to convey some degree of instruction; or to promote my principal design, that of laying, in an open and candid manner, before the world, the whole of my conduct. "Nothing have I extenuated, not set down ought in "malice." Whilst I have faithfully recounted my errors, I have traced them to the source from which they originated; and this I trust, will procure me some degree of exculpation. Sincerity, as I have often observed, is my boast.

boast. Indeed it is so much so, that were I guilty of the worst of crimes, I would not add to them by a denial.

I need not, I think, assure you, that the whole of the foregoing narrative consists of real facts: and though some of them may appear almost fabulous, there are many living witnesses to the truth of them. Nor are those incidents, which do not immediately relate to myself, less authentic. They either passed under my own observation, or are recited from undoubted authority.

I flatter myself you will readily perceive, from the circumstances I have laid before you, and from the general tenor of my conduct, that my misfortunes have rather proceeded from a train of untoward events, than from any other cause; and that my misconduct has been more the result of thoughtlessness and imprudence, than of a depraved disposition. And this being the case, I doubt not but my actions will be viewed by the world in a less unfavourable light than they have hitherto been.

As Shakespeare says, in the motto I have prefixed to my "Apology," "that the web of our life is of a mingled yarn, good and ill together;" that "our virtues would be proud if our faults whipt them not; and our crimes would despair, if they were not cherished by our virtues." I hope this consideration will weigh in my favour with the liberal and unprejudiced: and though I may not stand totally acquitted; though my faults may overbalance my virtues; I trust it will soften the severity of the public censure, and restore me, in some measure, to their good opinion.

Should the relation of my errors and their consequences prove a document to my own sex; warn them to shun the paths I have pursued; and inspire them with a greater degree of prudence and reflection than I have been possessed of, I shall have employed my time to some good purpose.—The certain effects of an inattention to a prudential system, are poverty, distress, anxiety, and every



every attendant evil, as I have most severely experienced.

May the world (particularly my readers) have the same indulgence and compassion for me, which I have unremittingly shown to others! And may Sterne's recording Angel drop the tear of pity and obliterate my faults!

G. A. B.

A LETTER

every attention will, as I have most severely experienced.  
May the world (particularly my readers) have the  
least indulgence and compassion for me, whose I  
have unwisely chosen to offend, and may I  
nevermore suffer the cost of my and my  
myself in the same manner.

C. A. B.  
The following is a list of the names of the  
persons who have been named in the  
above mentioned article, and who are  
now living in the city of New York.  
The names are given in the order in  
which they were named in the article.  
The names are given in the order in  
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AFTER  
The following is a list of the names of the  
persons who have been named in the  
above mentioned article, and who are  
now living in the city of New York.  
The names are given in the order in  
which they were named in the article.  
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The names are given in the order in  
which they were named in the article.

A  
L E T T E R  
T O  
JOHN CALCRAFT, Esq.  
F R O M  
GEORGE ANNE BELLAMY.

" So comes the reck'ning when the banquet's o'er,  
" The dreadful reck'ning, and men smile no more."

GAY.



L E T T E R

T O

JOHN CALCRAFT, Esq.

F R O M

GEORGE ANNE BELLAMY.

"The dwelling rock may, and need smile no more."  
"So comes the rockling when the pardner's o'er."

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# ADDRESS

TO THE

## PUBLIC.

**T**HE following letter was advertised for publication in the month of October 1767; but Mr. Calcraft, by an unwarrantable and unmanly exertion of power, (as related in my "Apology") obliged me to suppress it. Upon reading it over, in order to lay it before the public, I find that the resentment by which I was agitated, at the time I wrote it, made me express myself in terms suited to the injuries I had recently received, and which to an unprejudiced mind, may appear too much tinged with passion. This would induce me to let it lie in a state of oblivion, as it has done for many years, were not its publication absolutely needful to elucidate the foregoing letters.

Most of the facts, it is true, have been there introduced, as they could not have been omitted without breaking the chain of the narrative; yet as they are given in the following pages more explicitly, and tend particularly to an investigation of the ill-treatment I received from Mr. Calcraft, the propriety of annexing the Letter, will, I flatter myself, be apparent.

To many it may seem illiberal to let it appear after his death; but when it is considered, that the publication is so essentially necessary for the vindication of my own conduct, and to clear me of many cruel aspersions which have been propagated to my discredit, I hope it will not, upon due reflection, be deemed so.

In the state it was intended at first to be published, many of the letters I had received from him, were interspersed, for the purpose of refreshing his memory. But

as that is no longer needful, and they would by no means prove entertaining, as might be judged from that given in the "Apology," I have expunged them. I have also greatly curtailed the Letter itself, leaving out the most exceptionable parts. And as a poem, which was given me upon the occasion, has since made its appearance, it will be unnecessary to annex that.

Irritated by repeated injuries, and actuated by resentment at the time I wrote them, the following sheets were originally composed, with an impetuosity that might render them incorrect, and deficient in that regularity which might be necessary to make them fit for public inspection; and for this, I trust, a proper allowance will be made, more especially as I am not a professed Writer. Nor shall any thing ever tempt me take up my pen again upon so wretched a topic as myself. Perfectly at peace with the world, and every individual in it, even those who have loaded me with contumely and injuries, I can repeat the whole of the divine prayer, without any hesitation or mental reservation, and wait with patience and resignation the inevitable decrees of Providence.

Before I conclude this address, I would lay hold of the opportunity to request all my benefactors, to receive once more the warmest sensations of gratitude for the favours conferred upon me. I would likewise beg the community to which I belonged, to accept my acknowledgments. I am proud to boast my obligations to them; particularly to Messrs. Colman, Harris, Garton, Hull, and Mattocks. Nor am I a little concerned, that I am prevented by the late death of the worthy Mr. Younger, from placing his name in the number of those who assisted to save me from distress. And impressed with these sentiments, I shall ever remain, with the highest respect,

Their ever obliged,

Humble servant,

G. A. BELLAMY.

Duke-street, Dec. 1, 1784.



L E T T E R

T O

JOHN CALCRAFT, Esq.

FROM

GEORGE ANNE BELLAMY.

London, October 1, 1767.

S I R,

**I**N compliance with your repeated solicitations, I sit down to write to you, as I am indebted to you for so many hundreds of letters. I must premise, that it will require your utmost patience to read so long an answer as I shall have occasion to make it; but as I flatter myself many others will peruse it besides yourself, I shall presume to interrupt your parliamentary studies, and entreat your attention, as much time and application will be needful for you to digest so long an epistle.

I own, I do not think that a series of facts, relative to such insignificant beings as you and myself, can furnish any entertainment to the world; yet as I have had the happiness of being from my youth a favoured child of the public, I shall beg leave to request that they would decide between us. I should still have borne my injuries in silence, were it not that whilst you were perpetually reizing me with letters, containing the warmest professions of unremitting affection, you, and your female Thermites, were propagating the grossest falsehoods against me to my prejudice. But she has paid the debt of nature. So

ends my enmity and *her ingratitude*; which, as I have been informed, was fully repaid by *your's*; therefore peace be to her manes.

There was a time, when I should have apprehended that you would have been greatly mortified at a public statement of such an account, and I should have been afraid of putting you to the blush for it; but as you have convinced the world by your recent behaviour, that you are above all *mauvaise honte*, and have overleaped the bounds of modesty, my fears are all subsided, and, "I will a round unvarnished tale deliver." If I advance a falsehood, reproach me for it. I will force even you to allow that I still am just.

I am sorry to remind you, that when Lord George Sutton first introduced you to me, you was called *honest Jack Calcraft*; an epithet, in my mind, infinitely superior to *Squire John* the parliament man. But as you always had a great deal of the *amor patriæ* at heart, you may perhaps feel yourself more happy in your present exalted situation. I beg your pardon for making use of those two Latin words, I forgot you did not understand that language; though, like Boniface, you may, perhaps, love and honour the sound. But not to puzzle or give you more trouble than is absolutely necessary, I will inform you, that I mean *the love of your country*; and a more *worthy* or *learned* member than yourself, it must be allowed, is not honoured with a seat in St. Stephen's chapel. If your modesty prompts you to dispute this assertion, ever willing to please you, I will give up the point.

But to return.—You will please likewise to recollect, that the first visit you paid me after the unhappy dispute between Metham and myself, I candidly told you of my situation. At the same time I added, that I was so alarmed at his passionate disposition, as to be determined never to marry him, were he willing to carry his promise into execution, though I preferred him to all mankind; nor would I enter into any other connection whatsoever. Confiding in your general character, and induced by your professions of friendship, I made no scruple thus to inform you of the situation of my heart. For

at

at that period, I did not entertain the most distant idea of your harbouring a thought of love. Indeed, I could not suppose you was capable of so much presumption, as to think of rivalling a man, in every shape so infinitely your superior.

I then likewise informed you, that I had received ten bank bills of one hundred pounds each, in a blank cover. This gift I said, I attributed to Lord Downe, whose friendship for Metham prevented him from declaring himself my admirer. Notwithstanding the dial spoke not, it pointed. And as he was evidently the cause of Metham's rudeness to me, it was more than probable, that his *Lordship* thought of extricating me by it, from any little difficulties I might have been embarrassed in.

Upon my placing this confidence in *bonest* Jack, you advised me to make use of the money; telling me you was sure that the person, whoever it was, who had shewn himself so generous, would never expect a return. You then regretted, that it was not in your power to have been equally liberal. For had you not been circumscribed by fortune, you should have esteemed yourself happy in so favourable an opportunity of shewing yourself my *disinterested* friend.

I was the more inclined to believe you sincere in this declaration, as the sentiments coincided with my own. For I can with great truth affirm, that I never rendered a service with a view of receiving a return; always considering the person who had the power of obliging, overpaid by the internal satisfaction which most surely results from a liberal deed.

I remind you of this conversation, as some years after you brought me in debtor for *this identical thousand pounds*. Now, as you have in innumerable instances given me room to question your veracity, I have every reason to believe you was *not* the donor of the sum; but took advantage of Lord Downe's death, and the confidence I had reposed in you, to make claim to it. For though I cannot compliment you upon your erudition, your grandmother might have taught you the old saw, "dead men tell no tales." His Lordship was unfortunately killed before you claimed the debt, and to this



hour I firmly believe it was to *him* not *you*, that I owed this mark of munificence.

Indeed, at the time you said I was indebted to you for it, though I then had many reasons to despise your meanness, I did not think you so totally void of every principle and feeling, as to be guilty of such an imposition; nor was it ever to be thought that a being, who by artifice had so far deceived mankind as to procure himself the epithet of *honest*, should sacrifice a title he had been at such pains to acquire, for nothing. I therefore, as I could not contradict your claim, allowed it; and it is now too late to dispute it.

You will please to recollect, Sir, that upon my flying to Mr. Gansel's for refuge from the violence of Metham's temper, you had the modesty to introduce yourself at Donallan Park, by a *fallacious copy* of a *contract of marriage*, signed by *yourself* and your attorney. This you gave to the good old gentleman for his attorney to transcribe upon a stamp, in order to convince him of the *rectitude of your intentions*. False betrayer! bankrupt in honour as in love! This contract was in the penalty of *fifty thousand pounds*, which the credulous good old man, who then thought you merited the title of *honest*, esteemed so sure a pledge of your faith, that he ordered his attorney to change the sum to thirty thousand; alledging, that was a sum large enough to bind even a rogue.—But, thank heaven, we had none but those who were *perfect in rectitude itself* to deal with.

The contract bond which Mr. Gansel's attorney drew from your *signed copy*, I afterwards delivered up to your attorney, Mr. Stubbs, of Parliament street, in consideration of a sum of money which he brought me from you, together with an additional annuity of one hundred pounds a year, in trust, to Nicholas Linwood, Esq. Upon the receipt of this, I signed a general release; in which was included, the money remaining upon the diamonds you so bounteously bestowed upon your favourites.

As I presume your present studies occupy your mind too much to attend to such trivial matters, for, like Obadiah, the affairs of the state hang heavy upon your neck  
and

and shoulders, and you may have forgot the purport of it, I will present you with a copy of that ever memorable contract, which General Gansel sent me upon the death of his father. I will give it you verbatim. But should any of your friends (if you have any) be desirous to prove the authenticity of it, they shall be satisfied, as your hand is as well known as your face.

*Copy of the Contract, brought ready signed by Mr. Calcraft.*

"KNOW all men by these presents, that I John Calcraft, of Brewer-street, Golden-square, in the county of Middlesex, Esquire, am held and firmly bound unto Georgiane Bellamy, of Frith-street, Soho, Spinster, in the sum of fifty thousand pounds, of lawful money of Great Britain, to be paid to the said Georgiane Bellamy, her certain attorney, executor, administrator, or assigns, firmly by these presents, sealed with my seal, dated this 22d day of January,

1752. The condition of this obligation is such, that where- as the above-bounden John Calcraft, and the above-named Georgiane Bellamy, have mutually agreed to marry with each other; and therefore the above bound John Calcraft, shall and do marry the said Georgiane Bellamy, according to the rites and ceremonies of the Church of England; and shall not intermarry with any other person, save the said Georgiane Bellamy, or during the natural life of the said Georgiane Bellamy; then this obligation to be void, or else remain in full force.

"Signed,  
"JOHN CALCRAFT."

Now, my worthy Sir, this transaction will, I hope, convince the world, though it may not your partial self,

\* The Writer was always called Georgiane, till of late years, when it being necessary to refer to the register, it was found to be written George Anne.

that from the moment you signed this contract, being at the same time married, and therefore unable to fulfil it, you forfeited all title to the smallest degree of honesty. And I might truly pronounce you to be,

"Daring in vice, which does to profit tend,  
"False to thy God, thy mistress, and thy friend."

You will further please to observe, that the date to this fallacious contract was antecedent to my quarrel with Metham; that fatal passion, which you availed yourself of, not happening till his birth-day, which was the *thirtieth* of January, at which time you was honoured with being his humble friend. And even at this time, you intended to plant a dagger in his heart, as you was well convinced you must do, by supplanting him in my favour. For his fondness for me was well known to be carried to every excess of extravagance; and even the fault, which was the cause of our separation, evinced his madness; as no man, particularly one so remarkably well bred, could have made use of such rude expressions; before a select company of persons of distinction, unless he had been at the time torn on the rack of jealousy. But why do I talk to you of a breach of friendship, who esteem the word as merely a bugbear, and boldly set that as well as every other virtue at defiance!

I will now, if you please, take a retrospect of the innumerable favours you have graciously bestowed upon me. And this I can the more easily do, as they are engraven on the tablets of my heart, from whence they never can be eradicated.

After the mockery at Donallan Park was over, you declined my worthy friend's solicitations to spend a few days with him. Some remains of compunction for the deception you had just been guilty of, was, I believe to this hour, partly the cause of your declining the invitation. You alledged, that business of the greatest consequence required your being in town. But the moment Mrs. Smith and myself were seated in the chaise, you rode up to it, in seeming transport, and informed me, that my mother was waiting for us at Ingatestone.

I after-



I afterwards learnt, that your imposition extended to her also; and that you had prevailed upon her to accompany you to that place, with the assurance that Mr. Gansel had been witness to our being united for life. Relying upon the rectitude of this deceived, but worthy man, she did not entertain a doubt of our being married. The good woman consequently made use of all the power she had over me, to induce me to forget Metham, and learn the road to tranquillity, which I had so long been a stranger to.

Nor was you under any apprehensions of a discovery taking place through Mrs. Smith. As she was totally in the dark with regard to the transaction, she could only acquaint my mother that the old gentleman seemed happy at my being eligibly settled for life. As for myself, I was so perfectly miserable, that I evaded coming to an explanation; especially as the reproaches bestowed by my mother upon Metham, cut me to the soul. The two old ladies were as gay as if their years had been renovated, and seemed as happy, as if Hymen had already been present in his saffron robe, and with his lighted torch, to sanctify my wretchedness.

Though you are in general reluctant in doing justice, yet you must allow, that when the unhappy union had taken place, I shewed nothing but the strongest marks of aversion towards you. And had I *not* been partial to another, it was impossible for a girl of delicacy to be sensible of any degree of tenderness for a being like yourself. For I have often been ready to believe the Pythagorean system, and suppose you possessed more of the brute than of a rational creature. Two such opposite beings surely never met. To be happy, minds should be congenial. It is impossible that tranquillity, much less happiness, should exist where the sentiments disagree. It will be in vain to expect an union to be perfect, unless both have one pursuit, one hope, and one desire.

When I reproached you with your duplicity, in not accepting Mr. Gansel's invitation, you told me you was anxious for my mother to be of the party; and as she was not acquainted at Donallan Park, had you staid there, you could not have been completely happy, as

she would not then have been witness to your unbounded felicity. *Fine words!* I wonder where you *stole* them! The apathy which had taken possession of my mind, and which bordered upon stupidity, prevented me from investigating your behaviour at that time. And as I really believed you to be a man of integrity, and imagined my lot cast for life, I did not dare to examine the sensations of my heart upon the occasion.

When we came to town, you entreated me not to receive the visits of Lord Robert Sutton; as it was from the confidence he placed in you, by making you the furtherer of his affection, and from poor Metham's madness, you both founded your hopes. This Nobleman was your intimate, and had engaged you to plead his cause. But the man who can descend to be a pander, will gladly betray, as you did, his employer.

During my absence from town, I found you had been very lavish, in bribing those about me, to depreciate Metham, who, whilst he was villified, was happily insensible. Every ray of reason had deserted him, and he was in such a state of distraction, that he would have put an end to his existence, but for the unremitting care and tender friendship of Major Burton.

The morning after our coming to town, you called upon Miss St. Leger, afterwards the Major's lady, to anticipate the joyful news of your being the happiest of men, by having secured me for life. This was truly a Machiavelean step, as it totally prevented her from mentioning her lover's friend, whose character you was, at the very time, taking every method to blacken. In the same manner you introduced yourself to Lady Dowager Dillon and Lady Tyrawley, though you had never been in company with either of them, but once at my house. This you did, because you were well assured, two ladies of such unfulfilled virtue, would not have continued to visit, had they not supposed me to be really married; which indeed, both of them imagined to be the case, during my residence with Metham.

I was for some time after we came together lulled into a stupid languor, by the many falsehoods told of the man, you had so grossly deceived, and supposing my situation permanent, I endeavoured to make necessity a virtue;

virtue; and if I could not love you, which I found to be impossible, I resolved to atone in some degree for it, by the most unremitting attention to your interest.

In consequence of this resolution, I introduced you to General Braddock; well assured that his partiality to me, would soon prevail upon Lord Tyrawley to visit and befriend you. The result turned out to my wish, and you was soon made Agent to both: but I shall not dwell longer upon this subject, as I mean, though a bad arithmetician, before I conclude my Letter, to state a fair account of debtor and creditor between us. And that it is a true statement, many, very many living witnesses, will be able to vouch.

The April following, you earnestly entreated me to give up the annuity granted me by Metham, alledging that it was highly improper for a woman, who in appearance *was*, and would soon actually *be*, your wife, to retain any security, or receive any emolument from another man. I felt the truth of your argument, and wrote immediately to Mr. Moore, who was then in Ireland, to whom I entrusted the writings, but by some accident or other they were not then returned.

Upon this you gave me a settlement of one hundred and twenty pounds a year, which you had come into possession of by the demise of your grandmother, who was really a *gentlewoman*, and the first in your noble family. I do not mean in this observation to degrade you in your own good opinion, for you cannot be lessened in mine. We all would be great, beautiful and rich, had we the power. And you have ambition enough to wish, that the noble blood of the Howards ran through your veins; but was even that the case, it would only be the means of rendering you more conspicuously contemptible. For it is only goodness in the extreme, joined to shining talents, and tenacious honour, that constitutes *true nobility*. Mr. Pope, with great judgment, says,

“Worth makes the man, the want of it the fellow;  
“And all besides, is leather or prunella.”

Your



Your great qualifications lead another way. Passion, avarice, and luxury, mark you so strongly, that Comus's court seems to me to be your ultimatum; for neither religion, friendship, nor any social virtue, deigns to inhabit your capacious bosom.

When you presented me with the annuity, which was for my natural life, and for that of the child I was then pregnant with, I neither read, nor ever heard read, the writings, till I borrowed money upon it; and then I found that you, or the attorney, had made the penalty *three* thousand pounds, instead of *thirty* thousand. A mean, useless piece of chicanery, but corresponding with all your actions.

Upon my removing to Brewer street, I undertook to be your housekeeper for four hundred guineas a year, thinking that my salary and benefit would be fully sufficient to support us till your business should increase. At the end of three years, I found myself so greatly involved, that I was obliged to inform you of my having contracted debts to a large amount; when, to my very great surprise, you told me I was indebted to *you* for the thousand pounds I had been foolish enough to mention to you.

I scorned then to remind you, that my income was at that time infinitely greater than your's; and that I spent it in your house, with the greatest cheerfulness, not doubting but you would fulfil your liberal professions, when it was in your power; but to my cost, I found that in promises you was *mighty*, but in the performance of those promises, *nothing*.

When you grew rich, your avarice increased in proportion with your arrogance; and notwithstanding you denied *yourself* no luxury, you not only refused to pay the debts contracted for your house, but what I had expended for your brother and sister, whom at that time I considered as my own. I do not mean to pique myself upon œconomy. My profession took up too much of my time, to permit me to mind household affairs; and from the constant company we kept, numbers of whom were personages of the highest rank, something more was required than a tolerable income to entertain them; and, to my

my great satisfaction, you have been obliged to own, that your table was more elegantly served, during the time I presided as Governante, than when you allowed a Maitre d' Hotel two thousand five hundred pounds a year, merely for your table, though you rented an additional farm towards supplying it.

Reflect also upon the expence I put myself to in furnishing the garden at Hollwood, building a hot-house, succession-house, ice-house, together with the expensiture on the shrubbery; and all this from the suggestion, that you had settled the place upon my daughter and myself. Nor was I informed that this was not your intention, till our separation had taken place; when you disposed of it, pretending that you could no longer reside in an habitation which reminded you every moment of my loved idea. How this assertion corresponds with your behaviour at that period, and ever since, I leave you to judge.

If you will not do me the justice to own that I was indefatigable in promoting your interest, any of our acquaintance will affirm for me, that I was. It is a well known fact, that at the risk of my life, I once got out of my bed, at a time some promotions were to be made, in order to claim the promises of two officers who were to have regiments the next day. In the account of debtor and creditor, I purpose to present you with at the conclusion of this Letter, I shall set down the names of those gentlemen, to whom you are indebted for their agency through my interest.

As to the great expence you was at, it could not be attributed to me. For if you kept an extensive table, it was your interest to do so; and I could have no other advantage from it, than not being reduced to sit alone with a man, who was, at best, the object of my disregard and pity, from his ignorance and meanness. For notwithstanding you value yourself upon the manly exercise of boxing, yet, when you went to Cliefden, you enquired what a gladiator was, to the surprise of the company, who all concluded that you must have been acquainted with a brother combatant.

I am

I am unable to enumerate the injuries you have done me. I was a slave to you for six years; not only to your interest, but through the obstinacy of your ungrateful disposition. What pains have I not taken to prevent your flying in the face of one of the warmest of patrons, and the best of men, if he bestowed any place upon his own relations, conscious of your great and superior merit!

There is one accomplishment which I must readily allow you, and that is the great art of deception. By this you blinded your patron, who was one of the most sagacious of men; and, likewise, a noble Marquis, who had a heart too open to believe, that deceit could be hid under the masque of sincerity. You plied that nobleman with your *alies de perdri*, till you had the presumption to hope you would be able to accomplish your ambitious views, by forming a match between his Lordship and your daughter; a match unequal in every shape, as he was not only old enough to be her grandfather, but had your views been accomplished, he must, upon reflection, have been unhappy, from the idea of having polluted his blood with your's. But the girl had resolution enough to resist your compulsive threats; and I doubt not will be happier, with a mate more equal to her birth.

I have often wondered that you and your friend Doctor Francis, who lays claim to the merit of translating Horace, never studied together the Ode which begins with these lines,

“The man that’s resolute and just,

“Firm to his principles and trust, &c.”

Had you done so, you both would have appeared in a more eligible light than you now stand in.—But to proceed.

When Mr. Davy applied to you for the payment of the annuity on which I had borrowed five hundred pounds, without considering my condition, you came abruptly into my room to inform me of it. Justly incensed at your rudeness and want of feeling, (as my situation



ation ought to have claimed at least your *attention*, for I know you to be incapable of tenderness) I desired you to leave the room, and pay the money.

I, at that time, became acquainted with your having been married many years before I had the misfortune to know you; the consequences you are well acquainted with. My being deprived of my senses prevented me from making known my injuries. Had I done so, it must have endangered your life. For though Lord Tyrawley might not have been Quixote enough to enter the list with you upon account of a woman who had forfeited all claim to his protection, yet the deception you had been guilty of, in making his Lordship believe we were married, would most indisputably have excited his resentment, as it could only be deemed a subterfuge to answer your interested purposes.

Besides this, if I am rightly informed, you would have roused the resentment of a right honourable gentleman, that you had gained to introduce you as an *honourable* lover to the niece of one of the first Duchesses in the kingdom. But the chastisement you would have received for that would only have been manual. We are all sensible you have not the inclination to resent such treatment, as the blows given *manfully* by an officer you had justly offended, and borne *patiently*, were never noticed.

Upon this occasion, you adopted by intuition, Squire Ralph's maxim. I say, by intuition, as I can by no means suppose you acquainted with a book wherein all science and learning is contained. You, however, abound with *worldly wisdom*, though you are not *learned*; and think with Ralph, that

- " He who fights and runs away,
- " May live to fight another day.
- " But he that is in battle slain,
- " Will never rise to fight again."

Cowardice is the concomitant of guilt. In what a supreme degree then must you possess it! The first principle of rectitude, is that noble courage which undoubtedly

edly meets every difficulty, and looks upon life as nothing, when compared with the dread of preserving it with dishonour. You see I would still wish to instruct you; though I much fear, all this will be as little understood by you as algebra; nothing like a sentiment of any kind ever having found a place in your bosom, which is as dark as Erebus.

You now find, that with your great achievements, you have altered a disposition which, before your cruel treatment, never knew the sun to go down upon its wrath. You have presumed too far upon my apathy. But the gentlest tempers, when roused by repeated injuries, are not so easily quieted as those who are inflamed by every gust of passion. Before you had provoked me, you ought to have recollected what Lord Trawley so often warned you of, when he told you I was by nature a lamb, but, being roused, a lioness.

I will, however, *quiet* your seeming terror, by assuring you, that no provocation whatever, shall, at any time, tempt me to divulge the confidence placed in me, whilst I had the misfortune to be in your family. The seal of secrecy must never be broken. No aggravation can plead excuse for a breach of trust of that nature; and racks should not compel me to divulge what was entrusted to me when we were upon better terms. This superiority of mind I will retain above you; and I will force even *you* to own, with shame, that I still am *just*. When you sent to request my silence upon this head, I was so much incensed, that I knew not how to account for the daring supposition. I could not even think so meanly of *you*, as to suppose you could be guilty of a crime so atrocious and dangerous to society, particularly to a man who had raised you from nothing.

As you may set your heart at rest upon this subject, the fair field of retaliation may now go on without any violent agitations being excited in your mind; as injuring a woman, *with the law on your side*, is a trifle of no importance. You may think it so. But there will come a time when pungent remorse, the sure attendant on deception, will, if you possess the least atom of rectitude, harrow up your soul.

There

There are but two periods of your existence in which I would wish to behold you. The first is, *at that awful moment*. The second is, before that dreaded period happens. It is at the time you quit being a Yea and Nay man, and commence orator. Were I at the farthest part of the globe, I should wish to mount a Pegasus, to be present on the momentous occasion; as the power of a Demosthenes, joined to the sweetness of a Phny, must forcibly elucidate the laws, and prove you the Tully of the age.

You see my heart is ever warm in your favour. And after I have received such numerous unmerited favours from you, how can it be otherwise; for *Gratitude* is my second darling virtue. She is younger sister to Sincerity, with whom she generally keeps company. I once was under the necessity of repeating to you the following sentence from Dryden,

“He that is ungrateful has no crime but one.”

But the person who delights in sincerity, cannot harbour that heinous vice. She guards the heart from a crime of such a black dye. She is always as open as the day, unsuspicious as the lamb, and innocent as the dove. She is secure in her own coat of mail, for no assailant can pierce her celestial armour.

I told you I wished to instruct you. If you are perverse, it is not my fault. But your good fortune, together with your parliamentary studies, so totally possess your mind, that I imagine my intended kind documentations will have little effect. Ignorance itself must, however, allow that my intention is good. Always pleased when I am putting the blind in the way, I have intruded upon your patience, in order to point out to you the *right road*. Though you have hitherto been bewildered, repentance never comes too late. I shall therefore end my digression with two lines, spoken by Alinda to the captain of the Banditti, in the “Pilgrim.”

“Go, go, say thy prayers;

“For thou hast as many sins as hairs.”

The



The verse, though unequal, is adequate to your scientific knowledge, who would prefer the bellman's yearly production to the sweet numbers of Pope.

As my illness was long and painful, I have taken the liberty to introduce these sentiments in order to fill up a chafin. You complain of the enormous expence my indisposition cost you, and set down nine hundred pounds for physicians fees. As I told you in a former instance, I have reason to doubt your veracity. If that was the case, how came Mr. Adair to be so poorly gratified? Doctor Lucas, who restored me, had nothing but an ensign's commission for his son. And Doctor Ford, to whose care I was consigned at Bristol, only received such a trifle as was too contemptible to offer a gentleman of his known abilities, after the great attention he had paid me.

You will please at the same time to recollect, that your deception was the cause of my illness. It was not to be supposed a young woman, accustomed to adulation, could be informed that all her hopes were blasted by having gone through six years of servitude, (for I can tell it by no other name) with a man she could neither love, esteem, or regard (for fire and water are not so opposite) with any tolerable degree of patience. Degraded in my own mind in the supposition of a permanent connection with you, what must I not feel at being made a tool to the art of the meanest wretch of the creation! All I had left to divert my mind on this occasion was to be profuse; at once to indulge my own feelings for the poor, who were at that season in extreme want; and to mortify you, who, though you seemed to wish to gratify me, yet silently repined at what you afterwards called my unwarrantable extravagance.

But this you would not have consented to, had you not had a grand point in view, that of bringing me back to your detested habitation; and to effect this, after you had found your repeated promises to Mrs. Sparks ineffectual, and that I steadfastly refused to hear from you, or of you, you then waited upon Lady Tyrawley, and once more imposed upon her, by pleading the violence of your passion. You at the same time bound yourself to her ladyship by the most solemn oaths, that would she but prevail

vail upon me to return to Parliament-street, you would not only pay my debts, but sign a *carte blanche* to submit to any terms I should require. Her Ladyship and Mrs. Sparks, are living witnesses of your repeated perjuries.

Tired out with solicitations, which I should still have resisted, had not the friend of my youth, and the director, at this time, of all my actions, advised the indiscreet step, at last I yielded. Indeed his honest heart could not suspect, that, after having injured me in the tenderest point, you would add to the crime, by forfeiting the oaths you had made to fulfil your promises. It is true that you kept one of them, that of not seeing me alone; but this you did, lest my reproaches should confound you.

At length, after binding yourself every year for four years, you had honesty enough to inform me, that you would not comply with my expectations. This was the only action of your life, which I can term a favour; for my hatred and contempt were so great, that you and your house were my detestation. So extreme was it, that I languished more for the hour of separation, than ever fond lover did for receiving his bride's hand at the altar.

Now, Sir, your last transaction crowned every one of the foregoing. As I despised you too much to have any altercation with you, particularly upon pecuniary matters, I asked you to lend me two thousand pounds to redeem my jewels, which were at that time deposited with Mr. Bibby, pawnbroker in Stanhope-street, Clare-market. Upon your granting my request, I delivered the duplicates to your clerk, Mr. Willis, to get them out. And as you refused to pay the interest, I gave him a draft upon my mother for the sum it came to, payable in six months; which Mr. Bibby, not knowing my situation at the time, and supposing I should still remain in Parliament-street, accepted.

Mrs. Walker, I find, had informed you, of my fixed determination to leave you, some days before, though you affected to be surprised when the chaise came to the door. And when I went to Dublin, Colonel Sandford, your confident, acquainted me, that you likewise affected to be jealous of a being, who, you was well assured, was only the

the pleader of another's cause. The absurdity of this supposition needs no comment. You know my disposition well. You know that I am every thing in extremes, and despise mediocrity, particularly had I been in love; which would have prevented my leaving my admired Strephon. But you make me a princess Huntamunca, who says,

"I have a heart that's large enough for two;

"I've married him, and now I'll marry you."

But you could not have any possible right to censure my conduct, had it been so, as the terms we were upon made me mistress of my own actions. The falsity, however, of your wicked assertions, was fully evinced by my going to Ireland, for had I listened either to the noble Earl, or his Mercury, I should, undoubtedly, have remained in England, as his lordship's known generosity would have enabled me to pay my debts, (though mostly contracted for you) and to have lived splendidly.

You were no stranger, I am sure, to the truth of this, for your intimate Mr. M—— of the war-office, was well acquainted with it, as he came to Bristol on purpose to solicit the interest of the noble Earl, who was then minister of state. My feelings prevented me from falling into that connection. And with a nobleness of spirit, which does his lordship infinite honour, instead of being offended at my rejection of his suit, he begged to be permitted to continue my friend, though I would not receive him as a lover. Had I been inclined to listen to his lordship, his being married was an insuperable bar. I should not have taken the liberty to mention this transaction, had I not had his lordship's leave, in order to exonerate me from the many false imputations you have thrown upon me, and which he himself has heard repeated at Arthur's.

But to return to my jewels.—You will please to recollect, that when I delivered you the duplicates, I gave you at the same time receipts signed by Maisoneuf, Deard, and Lazarus, for six thousand three hundred pounds; and requested you to keep them till two great marriages, which were then in agitation, should take place; as the

cap-



*cap-ruindmill*, and one of the necklaces, together with my best ear-rings, were of exquisite workmanship. I am obliged to be thus minute, as I am sensible your memory often fails you, especially where the circumstance is neither lucrative nor agreeable. How well you kept this last promise, I shall take the liberty to remind you.

When you prevailed upon Lord Tyrawley to come down to Bristol, to use his interest with me to return to Parliament-street, you artfully informed him of the contract, and had the effrontery to say you were ready to execute it. But in order to prevent our coming to an explanation, like a true disciple of Machiavel, you prevailed upon General Honeywood to accompany his lordship. You very well knew my sentiments, and were assured, that had you possessed the power of compleating your engagement, my aversion was too firmly rooted to consent. I should have rejected your hand with scorn. The professions you made me, every post, were despised; and your affecting to feel for my loss, was contemptible, even to laughter.

The numerous stories propagated to my disadvantage, I could not hear till my return from Ireland, and then I only heard part: but a few days since I received full information of the whole, which forces me to call you a *dark assassin*. Upon my arrival at Chester, my maid brought me a curious letter, wherein, amidst nauseous professions of unalterable affection, you mentioned, that you had sent me the deed of annuity for one hundred and twenty pounds, which you said it was right that I should have; not that you meant it for my provision. What a poor flimsy artifice, which an infant could easily discover, as there was wrote upon the back of it in large letters, "Counterpart of the deed of annuity assigned to—  
" Morris, in trust for Mr. Davy." I am not surpris'd at your persisting in duplicity. The wonder would be, that all your thoughts and actions were not strongly marked with it.

Upon my arrival in Ireland, I received a letter from Alderman Cracroft, wherein he mentioned, that application had been again made to you for payment of the annuity, and that on your peremptory refusal, which you had given, alledging that it was only meant for my support,

port, and not to be disposed of, they would come upon me for payment, if I did not return the enclosed power signed, to enable them to sue for it. I accordingly signed and returned the writing; and their arresting you for it, was owing to your own insolence; it was occasioned by your ungentleman-like behaviour to Mr. Constable, a person, who, though not quite so rich as yourself in money, was infinitely richer in integrity, propriety of demeanour, and character.

Why, *at this time*, did you not reproach me with being the cause of that insult, as you afterwards termed it? For still you pestered me with letters, but neither of them contained one word of this mighty event, which you ought to have expected long before, as it was threatened: nor was there a single word about the jewels. But as I would not write to you upon any account, I left that affair to the alderman to refresh your memory; when, to my infinite surprize, he informed me, in his next letter, that you had delivered them to Jefferies in the Strand, who had knocked them to pieces, and sold them for eleven hundred pounds, though Maisoneuf, in his receipt, had agreed to take them back, allowing ten per cent. for the time I used them. As most of the capital articles were set by him, it would certainly have been not only more eligible, but more *honest*, to have made application to him, on the disposal of them, or to any other jeweller, in preference to a sword-cutler.

Indeed, I believe you was so ashamed of this transaction, that you ceased persecuting me any more till after my return to England. I will do you the justice to believe, that you would not have renewed your solicitations *then*, but from the knowledge you had gained of a political party frequenting my house. And though the noble earl was no longer minister, yet you hoped to make me once more the ladder to your ambition. But when you found all your endeavours fruitless, you most wickedly poisoned the mind of my first protectress, by making her believe it was her husband that enabled me to live as I did. By thus clouding your calumny, with assuring her ladyship that it was the Earl of H—— who befriended me,

you

you planted a dagger in my heart, which I was not made sensible of till very lately.

The baseness of this transaction was cruelty in the extreme, as you well knew it was another Earl of H—— that visited me; and had also been well informed, that his visits were not of a nature to give umbrage to any person, there being many others of the same party. But what added to the iniquity was, your inuendo of my not only having an affair of gallantry with a married man, but with the husband of the very lady who had protected me from my earliest infancy.

And even at this time you were well convinced, that I was disposed of to another. The idea of injuring the peace of mind of *any* person, is what my nature shudders at; particularly of one, who had honoured me with the strictest intimacy. Indeed, I have always esteemed the crime of adultery equal to that of murder, as I know not any difference between being robbed of life, or the affections of the object which endears it. These are notions which you have convinced the world by your late connection, that you have no idea of.

I must beg leave, though out of form, to rectify a mistake, under which I am informed you labour, about the visit I paid you and your inamorata, at a certain house near Leicester-Fields. I beg leave to assure you, that I should never have felt the least sensation of jealousy, had you chosen to give any lady the preference to me, even when we were upon the best terms. And this you must be satisfied of, if you will be at the trouble to investigate my behaviour during the wretched years I thought myself your partner.

But your apprehensions did not proceed from that humane motive. It was the fear of making your amour public; which must have been productive of the most serious consequences, both to your person and pocket. My *intimate's* ingratitude was that I wished to be convinced of; but for that, you might have taken up your residence together for life, and I should have said with Sir Novelty, "a good riddance, flap my vitals!"

But to return once more to the jewel.—Upon my going, soon after my arrival in England, to a party at Lady



St. Leger's. I was not a little surprized at seeing my bracelets, which were very remarkable, upon a lady's arms; nor was I less so, at being informed, that you had insisted upon her accepting them for the civility she had shewn your daughter. For this I was infinitely obliged, as your reigning favourite was a bad example for a young mind to have in view. Lady Harrington, at the same time, told me, that you had presented your *Del Toboosa*, with my best ear-rings, and several other jewels, which formerly belonged to me.

I was no longer at a loss, how to account for their only amounting to eleven hundred pounds you said they were sold for. But indeed, you always was generous, when you could be so at the expence of others. For example, I will just refresh your memory, with the recollection of twelve pints of *Tokay*, which Mr. Fox made me a present of. When I requested a pint for a lady who was a particular favourite of mine, and whom you professed much to admire, it was with the greatest difficulty one pint was obtained; as you alledged that you had given six to a favourite of your own, four to persons you had expectations from, and kept the two remaining for yourself.

Poor stretched being, who knew not that supreme pleasure of dividing with others, what providence has blest you with. Indeed, upon a retrospect of the partiality you have been favoured with by fortune, I could almost adopt the Pagan system, and suppose the blind lady presided at your birth, and stamped you another *Midas*. To carry on the allegory, I should farther suppose, that you will tremble at passing the Styx with Old Charon, and grudge even the penny. And how will you be terrified at approaching the three stern judges? But I will not frighten you before your time. With a constitution impaired by the most extravagant indulgence, and inheriting a painful malady, it cannot be long ere you appear before the most awful of all tribunals. But as we are forbidden to give judgment, I shall only say, "the Lord have mercy upon you!"

When I informed Alderman Cuscroft of your generous donations of my property, which you could not possibly have any claim to, but for the two thousand pounds lent me

me upon them; as you never gave any part of it, except ninety pounds for the *new sitting a scrip*, he complimented you with a bit of parchment. This he did, in order to prevent any future odium falling on you, by giving you an opportunity of producing a clear account in a court of justice.

Now came a number of letters from you, which were unanswered. Whether our meeting in Derby-court, on a Sunday in January, was premeditated or accidental, I know not. I believe the first; and that not out of regard to me, but, as I have before mentioned, in order to be introduced, through my means, to Lord H——. But had I again been a dupe to your arts, my power here could not have availed, as I never was but once of the party. Indeed, the visitors only paid me short *flor d'ors* before they met. And I can with truth affirm, I never was of the company but that once; as I declined having any knowledge of their politics, or holding any conversation with persons in that line.

Your affected agonies upon this rencounter were truly ridiculous. You then went to a coffee-house, I think the Prince of Orange's Head, the corner of York-street, St. James's, from whence you wrote me numerous letters. And likewise sent dear Nurse Carter to me, who at that time presided as your house-keeper, to plead your cause, and implore admittance for you, with the promise of another *carte blanche*.

This was your last trial of skill, and which carried with it the greatest probability of success, as you knew my partiality and gratitude for your ambassadress; who had not only been attentive to me, but had affectionately fostered my children. As I wish to be your *constant remembrancer*, I must here stop to put you in mind, that you faithfully promised me to settle twenty pounds a year upon her. But, as I have said before, you was always careful to forget every thing that you were interested in. Pardon me, I mean only in lucrative objects; for a presumptuous pride, divested of spirit, made your recollection perfect enough, when you thought yourself neglected or despised; yet you wanted the *proper pride* to resent the affront: for the ferocity of the bear, you join his docility,

when your interest requires it; and you would *dance*, I mean, *move* to any fiddle which tended to your emolument. You see I am willing to allow you all the good qualities you possess, in return for the many bad ones you have undeservedly loaded me with.

You afterwards forced yourself into my house; when assuming the affected agonies of *love*, (forgive me, thou chaste power, for daring to make use of thy sacred name, when speaking of a being incapable of feeling thy tender delicate sensations!) and finding all your fallacious endeavours useless, you attempted to destroy yourself. Upon this occasion you must at least allow, whatever I formerly had been, that I was totally obedient to your will. For, acceding to your intention, I entreated that you would permit me to call in some witnesses to the *Tragedy*, as I deemed it a crime that such an *exalted* character should make his exit with only *one* spectator.

Here you must acknowledge, that I gave you a proof of my not being *selfish*. You, however, soon retracted your tragic resolution, and put your sword into its scabbard. What a pity! Had you gone off thus heroically, you might have escaped the imputation of being a monster of ingratitude, and consequently a pest to society\*.

I hear am indebted to the falsehoods you have propagated relative to me, for being traduced in a wretched performance which made its appearance whilst I was in Ireland. It was said to be written by a being that calls himself a sea-officer. But I can scarcely suppose, that any person who denominates himself a gentleman, would write such vile stuff of a woman he was never acquainted with, and who never injured him. I rather think it was some poor scribbler you had hired for that purpose.

But to return to Jermyn-street.—When you was convinced that there was no possibility of your being ad-

\* Private intelligence to those who may not know it.—Mr. Fox entrusted the gentleman with a conversation he had with his Royal Master, under an injunction of secrecy. And he imprudently divulged it, to the prejudice of his noble benefactor. Which not only occasioned those fine lines in Churchill, but a poem entitled “Ingratitude.”



mitted more, you did not stop at any falsehood to blacken and depreciate me. At the time my affairs rendered it necessary for me to go abroad, you again pretended a return of affection. You offered me your house in Dorsetshire; and when that was absolutely refused, you once more bound yourself to compromise my debts in a year, though you were sensible I had been enabled, by the presents I had received, and Mr. Cracroft's assiduous friendship, to lessen them considerably.

When you found that I refused to see my children if you was to accompany them, which you offered to do the approaching summer, your abuse began again; and you sent me an annuity, conditionally, upon my living abroad, together with two hundred pounds. As to the general release, I could have no objection to sign it, having no demand; but as I allowed seven hundred pounds for the annuity, you could not have any right to prescribe my residing in England; particularly as you well knew I should never trouble you.

I must now congratulate you upon a manœuvre, which seems to show that you aspired to be thought an idiot. But this, indeed, you may do, to impose upon those who are shocked at your unparalleled ingratitude, which is reprobated even by your dependents, and those who formerly kept you company. It appears, that you would rather have the imputation of folly, than of complete knavery; or else you would not have desired your intimate, Mr. *Single Speech*\*, to ask the honourable Mr. — whether the children were not his.

O, thou head of the Wrongheads! couldst thou be so simple as to imagine, that had this been really the case, he would have divulged it? I must, however, assure you, to my no small mortification, and *their disgrace*, that they are, *bona fide*, your own. And give me credit for the declaration, when I say, that I would have preferred the most abject being to your wretched self, who, in my opinion, are a compound of every vice, vulgarity, and meanness. But as your patriotic principles coincide with those

\* Mr. H—— never spoke in parliament but once. Then, however, he spoke remarkably well.

of Mr. *Tother-side*, this mistake, upon recollection, is not to be wondered at.

You have long made me suffer, in silence, the loss of the good opinion of the world, and the averted eye of cold contempt; but these, important as they are, cannot be compared to the poignant torment of my mind. The deviation from virtue, even with a beloved object, is attended with severe reflection and remorse. How much more so must my sensation be, when, having been for so many years the dupe of your artifices, I feel myself reduced to self-contempt, from being connected with a person who has been always the object of my dislike, but is now of my aversion.

I had like to have forgot the obligation I lie under to you for breaking open my cabinet, which I had ordered to be sent to my mother's. As you chose to keep the piece of furniture, you imagined the contents of it ought likewise to be your's. But being certain you could see nothing in it that could give you pleasure, I am inclinable to forgive you. I must say, however, that to presume to look into the confidential letters of any person, without permission, would shock any one who possessed the least degree of rectitude or propriety. But I forgot I was addressing you, who are insensible to both.

The use you made of this circumstance, which I have already mentioned, and have but lately acquired a knowledge of, does you infinite honour. And at the same time, the continued *esteem* and *lasting friendship* of the noble Earl, redound to mine. To mortify you still more, these are likely to continue, in despite of all your machinations. I take this opportunity to declare, that I never received a present from Lord Harrington, but of one fifty-pounds; which I believe was intended as a return for the toys I purchased for Lord Petersham.

But lest this declaration should be supposed to carry with it a desire to be restored to Lady Harrington's good graces, I must beg leave to say, that I have already declined many invitations to Harrington-House, from her ladyship herself; who thought fit to employ, upon the occasion, a nobleman she concluded I could not refuse. This was no less a personage than Comte Hallang. But  
though

though I feel every sensation of gratitude for her ladyship; yet no inducement will ever prevail upon me to associate with any person, be their distinction ever so high, who can harbour for a moment a suspicion of that sincerity I make my boast. As such a condescension would lessen me more, if possible, in my own opinion.

As I make no doubt but her ladyship will read this; and as I have reason to be assured of her partiality for me; if you are admitted into her house at this time, I think you may bid adieu to an *entrée* at that residence. I had every respect for the noble Earl at the Stable-yard; but it was so distant, that I never spoke to him in my life but at table. Nor can I put his attractions, either personal or mental, in competition with the one in question; the qualities of whose mind and heart, make him esteemed and revered by all who have the happiness of knowing him.

Were it possible to enumerate your mean actions, they would fill volumes. One, however, of a singular kind, I must remind you of; and that is, your refusing to keep the horses which were given me; though when in town, you daily drove a pair of them.

When I sent you word, some short time since, that I was arrested for the champagne I had wrote for, by your order, to Mr. Woodifield, to send to Germany, you refused paying it, notwithstanding your clerk assured me, that you had set it down in the marquis's account. You refused to pay it; rightly judging, that I was under too many obligations to his lordship, to set such a trifle in competition with the favours he had conferred upon me; and you presumed likewise, upon his being in Germany at the time.

Further, when I was applied to by Mr. Finmore, for six and thirty pounds, for claret for your own table, through my indiscretion in writing for it, by your order likewise, I peremptorily refused to discharge it; notwithstanding your meanness in telling him, that I had ordered the wine for my own use, and therefore you would not pay for it. A circumstance you ought to have been ashamed to tell him, had I ever dealt with him: but you was conscious of the fallacy of the assertion; as, for the last four



years I was in your house, I had all the wine for my own company from Mr. Tourbeville, and no other merchant.

As a friend, I would advise you to settle this dirty affair, as soon as possible, for I am determined to contest it: not that you can stand in a more contemptible light than you do, for I may say of you, what Cato says of the Emperor,

“Cæsar aſham’d? Has he not ſeen Pharfalia?”

As to myſelf, you are ſenſible I never drank any wine before my illneſs, but what was diluted: and that illneſs was occaſioned by your *exceſs of love*, as you termed it. From ſuch *exceſſes* good Lord deliver me, and all thoſe unhappy beings who are deceived by ſuch reptiles as yourſelf!

Though rather out of due courſe, I have reſerved ſome of your *chief d’œuvres* for a *bonne bouche*. I ſhall begin with the affair of Mr. Sparks. You entered into a joint bond with me to Sparks, for four hundred pounds which I borrowed of him, to pay Mr. Smith of the Exchequer. For this, upon your pleading want of money, you gave a freſh bond, and put off the payment till the year following. And after our ſeparation, you moſt unmanly reported, that you had given me the money to diſcharge the debt. This was one of the moſt ridiculous falſhoods you ever advanced. It is evident to a perſon of the weakeſt underſtanding, that had you given me the money, you certainly would not have renewed the obligation. An aſſertion of this kind is but a triſſe to you, for you are ſo accuſtomed to untruths, that you ſeldom ſtartle at the moſt glaring.

But in order to ſet this affair in a clear light, it will be neceſſary for me to repeat an event, which, though it may afford a proof of my indiſcretion, I hope will not blacken my heart. Upon my having loſt a conſiderable ſum at play, I requeſted you to lend me four hundred pounds till my benefit. Be ſo good as to recollect, that this was not upon Sparks’s account. When I made the requeſt, you told me that you would grant it, on condition that I would ſtay at home the ſame evening. Nay, you

you went farther; for you desired a female intimate to inform me, that you would pay all my debts in the morning, if I would cease to be cruel.

Though I shuddered at the proposal, as I should have done at the sight of a basilisk, yet necessity made me consent, as I had company of my own to pass the evening. Soon after eleven o'clock, Lady H———n called in, and insisted that I should accompany her to a party in Arlington-street. You had then lent me the money, and claimed my promise; but the two female friends, who had spent the evening with us, preparing for home, and her ladyship strongly urging me to attend her, I accepted her invitation, and left you to indulge your own pleasant fancies.

It being a very fine morning, and my chair being at Harrington-house, we all agreed to run down the Green Park. Here I have every reason to believe I lost my pocket-book, as the nobleman who honoured me with his arm, noticed the jingling of something in my pocket, and pleasantly enquired if I carried the keys of the house about me. This noise I apprehend was owing to the lock, which, in dancing, had brought up the book. I am the more confirmed in this conjecture, as a gentleman of known veracity, acquainted me, that he saw a person pick up the book. By this you see, I allow, that I kept very early hours.

This loss of mine was not known for some time to any person in the family, except Clifford and myself, notwithstanding it was advertised, with the offer of a handsome reward, exclusive of the bank-notes it contained, for a paper which was in it. How you got possession of that paper, or the advantage you made of it, I leave to your own feelings. Though, indeed, your heart is callous to every proper sensation, and I should wish to explain this fact, more fully, to display your *reciditudo*, I shall, however, only say with Oroonoko, "*Our gods have no punishment for such unheard-of crimes.*"

The bills, you at that time lent me, you have since affirmed, were given me to pay Mr. Sparks. How then came you afterwards to demand the money of me, and absolutely to receive it at a stipulated time? It was very

improbable I should borrow money to take up your bond. But you well know, it was borrowed to pay Mr. Shaftoe a play debt. To my shame I own it. What is in its nature wrong, no words can palliate. I am above the low art of endeavouring to extenuate my faults. I have made the world my confidante ever since I launched into it, and after so many years of ingeniousness, it would be folly in the extreme to attempt to do so. But to you I cannot be responsible, as the misery you have brought upon me, deserves the most unlimited contempt and reprobation.

It would not only be absurd, but fruitless, to affect mystery. Had not your great affection induced you to load me with obloquy, the world would not have supposed me culpable in leaving you. Though I must acknowledge, that the generality of mankind usually give larger credit for error than any other commodity; and I have been favoured, through your generous assistance, with over-measure for my indiscretions.

You well know, that the first six years of our connection, I was totally insensible to happiness, and in a perpetual bustle to promote your interest. The last four were perfectly miserable; and it cannot be a matter of surprise, that I ran into dissipation to avoid thought. In this, however, as I have already said, I was only culpable to the world and myself, as you could not possibly have any right to censure my conduct. My hatred was invincible; and I never entered your detested residence, but with the most piercing regret. Even my children almost displeased, from their unfortunate proximity to you.

As your affianced wife, you must own that I did *more* than my duty. And had I really loved you, I could not have been more anxious, either to promote your interest, to hide your ignorance, or to curb your intemperance. The latter generally ended, with my being employed in the pleasing avocation of a nurse; and even in that I could not please, as you well knew it was not from affection that I tended you, but from what I then thought my duty.

I shall



## JOHN CALCRAFT, ESQ. 297

I shall now, in order to convince the world of the obligations I *really* lie under to you, take a retrospective view of the pecuniary transactions which have passed between us. In the first place, I shall enumerate sums I have received from you, and then *per contra*, set down the advantages that have arisen to you from our union.

If the bank-notes I received in the blank cover came from you, which is very much to be doubted, I am to stand indebted to you for that 1000l.—Towards the expences of a ball which I gave on your daughter's birthday, you sent me 105l.—You made me a present of your picture, in miniature, set with rose diamonds, value 20l.—You likewise gave me a second-hand repeater, which cost 35l.—You paid for new-setting a diamond sprig 90l.—You settled on me an annuity of one hundred and twenty pounds; but as not one year of it has been paid, I cannot consider myself as indebted to you for it.—I received, to give up the contract bond, and to drop the suit commenced against you for the diamonds sold by Jeffries, 200l.—You granted me an additional annuity of one hundred pounds a year, which I received for four years; the amount consequently is 400l.—You say, that the expences attending my indispositions whilst with you, but for which I have only your bare *ipse dixit*, amounted to the sum of 900l.—These are all the sums of money that you expended, or have supposed to have expended, upon me during our connection.

Now behold the other side—were I to be paid by you for the six years slavery I underwent with you, and the four years misery, it would amount, at the most reasonable calculation, to a very considerable sum; but for that I shall leave a blank.—To proceed to articles for which I can make a charge—There is due to me upon the receipts for the diamonds, allowing thirteen hundred pounds paid for the fashion, 3000l.—Had the annuity of one hundred and twenty pounds been regularly paid, it would have amounted for the sixteen years due, to 1920l.—I expended, during my residence with you, eight years receipts at the theatres, amounting to 9600l.—You received General Braddock's Agency, which you had upon my account, four years, at three hundred pounds

per annum, 1200l.—The General likewise left you upon his decease, concluding that we were married, full 7000l.—Lord Tyrawley's Agency, which you procured through me, and of which you promised me the emoluments, brought you in at least five hundred pounds yearly, for seven years, which amounts to 3500l.—General Mordaunt's, which you procured by the same means, yielded you three hundred a year for six years, 1800l.—General Lascelles's, the same sum yearly for nine years, 2700l.—You had of mine five coach and two saddle horses, worth 250l.—Together with a town chariot quite new, which cost 147l.—I paid for Champagne, which agreeable to your request I wrote for to send to the Marquis of Granby, and which you charged to his lordship's account, 80l.—I expended upon your brother, Captain Calcraft, at the Academy, and for other necessaries, 350l.—I likewise paid for clothes, &c. for your sister, during six years, the sum of 400l.—I paid Mrs. Jordan's bill for *real* necessaries, 160l.—I laid out in building a hot-house, ice-house, &c. at Hollywood, upon the supposition that it would be mine and my daughter's after me, 400l.—To this, by way of concluding article, I may add, that I saved during the fire in Channel-Row, your books, furniture, and thirteen hundred pounds in cash, from the hands of the mob.

Having thus enumerated the different items, I will leave you, who are so great an adept in figures, to draw the balance. You will soon see, that it is *greatly* in my favour; and I request that you will send me a draft for the sum as soon as possible, in order to conclude all transactions between us.

I thought to have concluded here: but you must permit me just to add, that I have often been tempted to think there was not a fallen angel in all Pandemonium, to which I could not resemble a living character. \* You, however, in this similitude, transcend every other mortal;

\* When this is considered as the ebullition of resentment, from a person smarting under the most aggravating injuries, and which has long since subsided; due allowance, it is to be hoped, will be made for the severity of it.

for

for you have pride equal to Lucifer, though you want his spirit; to which are added the turbulence of Moloch, and the avarice of Mammon.—You see I am still desirous of introducing you into good company.

It was very impolitic in you to send your brother to me, to dissuade me from publishing this letter; you supposed that my regard for him would prevent me from exposing him in his relation; but no power on earth shall prevent me from doing it. If I am amenable to the laws of my country, for making known, in this manner, my injuries and your perfidy, carry your threats into execution. No martyr that ever suffered in the cause of religion, resigned themselves to their fate with greater cheerfulness; even death shall not deter me.

Before I conclude, I most solemnly assure you, that neither Mr. Woodward nor Mr. Kelly, who I find are the marked objects of your resentment, ever saw, heard, or read a single line of this letter; and that I have neither been abetted or assisted by any living creature; nor has any person whatever perused a line of it, but one gentleman, who took the trouble of reading four pages; when being tired of so worthless a subject, he threw it down, in order to pursue his favourite study of alchymy, with his researches after the Philosopher's Stone.

Yet let me again protest to you, that every article which I am acquainted with, and which you are so apprehensive about, is as securely locked in my breast as it is in your bosom—So farewell—"Read this, and then to breakfast with what appetite you may."

G. A. BELLAMY.

F I N I S.



of your belief with equal to each other, though you were  
in doubt, to which the absence of doubt  
is not a condition, but an effect.

CONFIDENTIAL

13

and my regard for him would be increased by his having been so long in the world.

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1. The first step is to identify the problem or issue that needs to be addressed. This involves gathering information and understanding the context of the situation.

*[Faint, illegible text at the bottom of the page]*

number of your representative have been

was a large line of the letter, and the living creature was

10 JA 67

When being used as a favorite food of the

with its resistance against the Phylloxera - Stone.

which I am acquainted with.

is in your pocket--So farwell--

Product which will be sold

C. A. P. L. M. A.

85. *Syll. ior. ad. iupham.* OLIV  
OLIV. *Mandras de vol. 11*  
*OLIV. M. ior. ad. iupham.*

1882-1901

Alfreda B. 1884

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